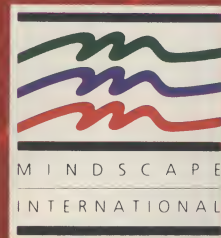
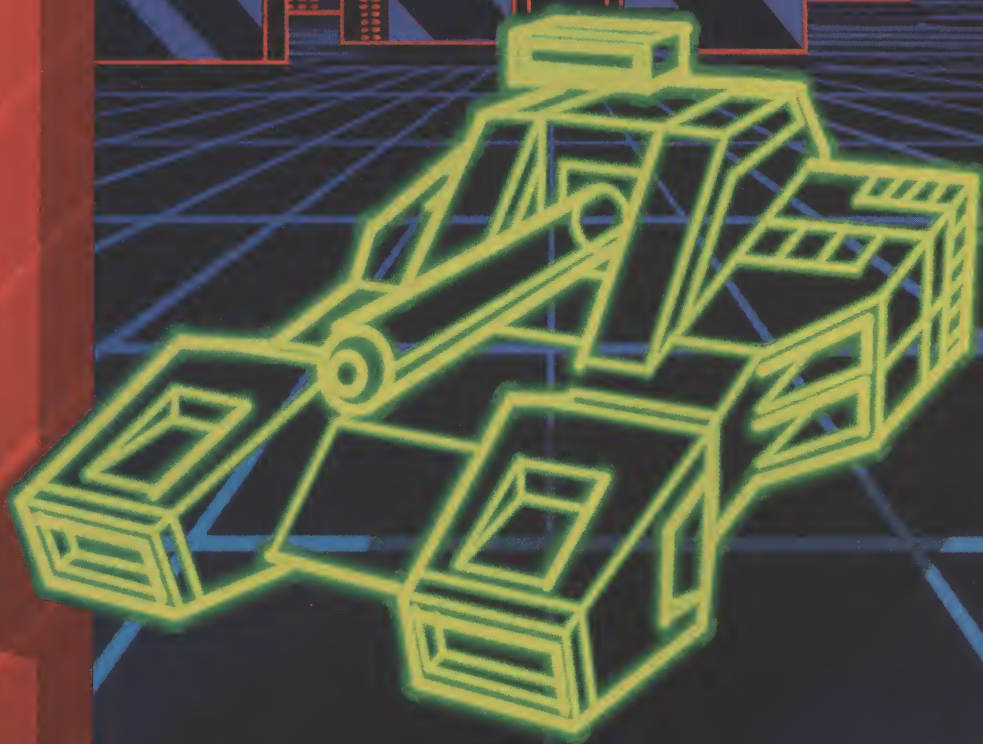


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# IBM

## PAPERBOY

Elite, PC, £24.99

Yep, it's back again. The brilliant coin-op, that was also an 8-bit hit, is now making more fans as a 16-bit conversion. The game, in case you don't know (and if not, where have you been?), has you playing a paper-boy of the American variety (who have a tendency to throw papers rather than popping them through the letter box like civilised English paperboys).

Your task is to pedal your bike down a typical American sidewalk bunging papers into your subscribers' mailboxes. If you can't manage a mailbox, a window will do! Miss anybody and they will cancel their subscriptions – and rightly so. As if that isn't enough to cope with, the rest of the world and his wife seem to be hellbent on giving you a hard time, so until you have learnt to anticipate what's coming, collisions will be frequent.

This version caters for both EGA, CGA and Tandy displays, and while the graphics are inevitably a little blocky they still have a nice cartoony feel to them. Gameplay is as good as it can be without the arcade machine's handlebars. A very good, addictive conversion.

**ACE RATING: 800**



▲ **Paperboy on the PC — as you can see, the graphics are still OK. You can play in EGA or CGA, but either way the gameplay is great.**

# ST

## PAPERBOY

Elite, ST, £19.99

This really does look and feel like the arcade original. I really can't fault the graphics and sound, and the gameplay has all the charm and sheer addictiveness of the coin-op too. Elite has done a superb job on all the Paperboy conversions, which considering the excellence of the 8-bit versions is hardly surprising. The bonus sequence in the park is especially well-executed. Highly recommended.

**ACE RATING: 850**

## GEMINI WING

Virgin/Mastertronic, ST, £19.99, Amiga version reviewed Issue 26, Ace Rating 760

This shoot-em-up from Virgin really doesn't offer much more than most similar games currently available for the ST. Sure, it all looks fairly pretty, and it does offer a simultaneous two-player option, but the gameplay is not that hot.

The sprites are not quite as smooth or as fast as those in the Amiga version, so the game feels a little stiff when you are playing it. Additionally the soundtrack that was superb on the Amiga sounds strained when transferred to the ST's inferior sound chip, and I

▶ **Gemini Wing on the ST — it looks almost identical to the Amiga version. It's a hell of a lot slower though, but unfortunately that doesn't make it any easier or more playable.**



guarantee you will turn it down after the first five minutes. Not a horrendous game, but not an essential buy either.

**ACE RATING: 650**

# CPC

## GEMINI WING

Elite, Amstrad CPC, £9.99cs, £14.99dk, Amiga version reviewed Issue 26, Ace Rating 760

CPC owners get their chance to do battle with whatever it is you're supposed to be doing battle with

speed. Blips and blops accompany the action, and the update is so slow, it seems better suited to a budget adventure game. No seriously, it is that bad. Still, we can at least be thankful that it does scroll!

**ACE RATING: 352**

# C64

## GEMINI WING C64

Virgin/Mastertronic, C64, £9.99cs, £14.99dk, Amiga version reviewed Issue 26, Ace Rating 760

Take a good look back at the history of shoot-em-ups on the 64. Uridium, Terra Cresta, Staray. Now keep looking back, because you ain't gonna find no future in Gemini Wing. The sprites are small and blocky, except for the bad guys, which are expanded sprites, which makes them large and blocky. The backdrop is pretty terrible too. There is so much detail, picked out in such bad colours, that it's impossible to see where your ship is, let alone the enemy bullets. Control is sluggish and the soundtrack is awful. Avoid.

**ACE RATING: 250**

## GEMINI WING - WHAT WENT WRONG?

It looks like Gemini Wing turned into a bit of a disaster in so far as the C64 and Amstrad versions go. But why, considering that the arcade version was nothing more than a basic shoot-em-up? 'The Amstrad version is so slow because of the amount of colours on screen,' claims Dan Marchant from the Sales Curve. 'We did try to do a faster version with fewer colours, but it looked really naff.' But what of the confusing C64 backdrops? 'I guess the programmers, Imagitec, tried to copy the arcade backdrops, which they did quite well, but in hindsight maybe it was the wrong thing to do. Still, we're happy with it, and so are Virgin/Mastertronic. If nobody else likes it, I guess it's just bad luck. You can't have a hit every time.'

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# FEEL THE MOVIE

What do you get when you mix the movie magic of Walt Disney and Lucasfilm, with the realism of a full-size flight simulator? Rik Haynes flies the theatre-simulator...

**W**alt Disney's latest theme-park attraction at the EPCOT Centre in Florida, Wonders of Life, opened to a rapturous general public last month. At the heart of this pavilion devoted to life, health and medicine is Body Wars, a Fantastic Voyage-type ride utilising Disney's newly developed theatre-simulator technology.

Body Wars is a thrill ride through the immune system of the human body in a simulated battle between trauma troops and infection fighters. Stunning anatomical images, produced through computer graphics and special-effects film techniques, combine with the sensations of a high-speed race against time as guests accompany an ex-fighter pilot and a medical expert on a "fantastic voyage" aboard the cabin of a miniature body probe. Body Wars is in effect a 40-passenger flight-simulator, hence the term theatre-simulator: a synthesis of movie special effects (Americans call their cinema's theatres) and civilian/military flight-simulators.

The theatre-simulator concept is a collaboration between Disney Imagineers (the

creative design, engineering, production and project-management subsidiary of Walt Disney, responsible for all attractions at the Disneyland and Disney World theme parks) and Industrial Light and Magic, the special effects production division of Lucasfilm. Another division, Lucasfilm Games, produce brilliant computer games like *Zak McKracken*, *Maniac Mansion*, *Rescue on Fractulus*, *Ballblazer* and *Battlehawks 1942*. George Lucas, the man behind the *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* movies and founder of Lucasfilm, has taken a personal hand in helping with the theatre-simulator design.

The original theatre-simulator ride was first unveiled at Disneyland back in 1987. Presented by M&M/Mars, *Star Tours* is a *Star Wars* inspired ride taking you on a space voyage to the Moon of Endor. The whole atmosphere is enhanced by the presence of two lovable *Star Wars* characters - C3PO and R2D2. Cutting

edge technology is employed to make you actually believe you are on-board a *Star Speeder*. By synchronising a stunning film with the motion of a theatre-size simulator, passengers actually feel what they see, the action virtually out of control. *Star Tours* is open now at Disneyland in California, and will open in early 1990 at the Disney-MGM Studio's in Florida.

Body Wars has just opened in the Wonders

**Universe of Energy: Another Future World attraction at EPCOT centre - Future World showcases imagination, knowledge and technologies of the future. Presented by Exxon, this is a unique 97-passenger theatre-car glide through a primeval diorama - a forerunner of the theatre-simulator partially powered by photovoltaic solar cells. Audio-animatronic dinosaurs, winged reptiles and special effects such as projected smells, raging storms, earthquakes and an erupting volcano, help chronicle the Earth's energy resources. Disney audio-animatronics characters are a combination of cybernetics, computers and audio-visuals.**





◀ **Horizons:** The desert farm of Mesa Verde, one of the envisioned communities of the future presented by General Electric. Horizons is another Future World attraction featuring the Omnisphere: the largest screen and motion picture film format in the world. The Imax frame area is about ten times the area of 35mm feature film frame. By putting the two standard Omnimax screens together, the Omnisphere screen measures 80 feet high by 240 feet across. Horizons also has 48 audio-animatronic figures and 36 animated props.

EPCOT centre opened on October 1st, 1982. Other Walt Disney World Trivia: (1) Walt Disney World has more than 28,000 employees. (2) It covers 28,000 acres or 43 square miles – twice the size of Manhattan. (3) Only 25% of the land has been developed, and another 25% is designated a wilderness preserve.



**Star Tours:** Visual sensations and actual motion combine to create a thrill attraction.



◀ **Droids repairing a battle-scarred Star Tours Star Speeder** – offering a slight sense of foreboding before the impending space flight. Passengers take in a sales pitch for the latest intergalactic travel packages now being offered to the humble space traveller.



▲ **Star Tours:** Passengers waiting to board the 40-passenger Star Speeder theatre-simulator before it takes off for the Moon of Endor. Get ready to encounter a galaxy full of misadventures...

ion, based on life, health and medicine. Michael Eisner, chairman and chief executive officer of Walt Disney, says: "For more than 10 years, our Imagineers have been searching for a way to dramatise the inner workings of the human body. Body Wars links the future of the health sciences in a dynamic and entertaining way."

Walt Disney has plans for further theatre-simulator developments in the future, and with the opening of the Paris-based Euro Disneyland in 1992, you may be able to experience the thrill of a theatre-simulator without the thrill (and expense) of a trip to the States...

**Body Wars presented by Metropolitan Life Insurance:** an artists impression of the thrill ride through the immune system of the human body... wonder where the exit is?



of Life pavilion at EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community Of Tomorrow) centre in Orlando, Florida. Using the same theatre-simulator technology as Star Tours, Body Wars redirects the theme towards inner space – the human body. The ride begins with an attack on a person's epidermis by a giant, germ-carrying splin-

ter. Instead of a Star Speeder, you board a microscopic body probe to explore the inner wonders of the human body, racing to find the immune-system ammunition needed to fend off the troops of bacteriological invaders. Body Wars is the centre piece attraction at Wonders of Life pavil-



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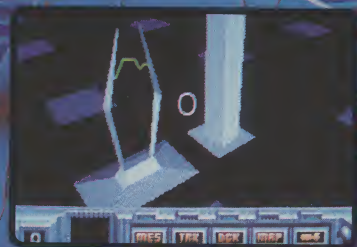
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Screenshots from ST version



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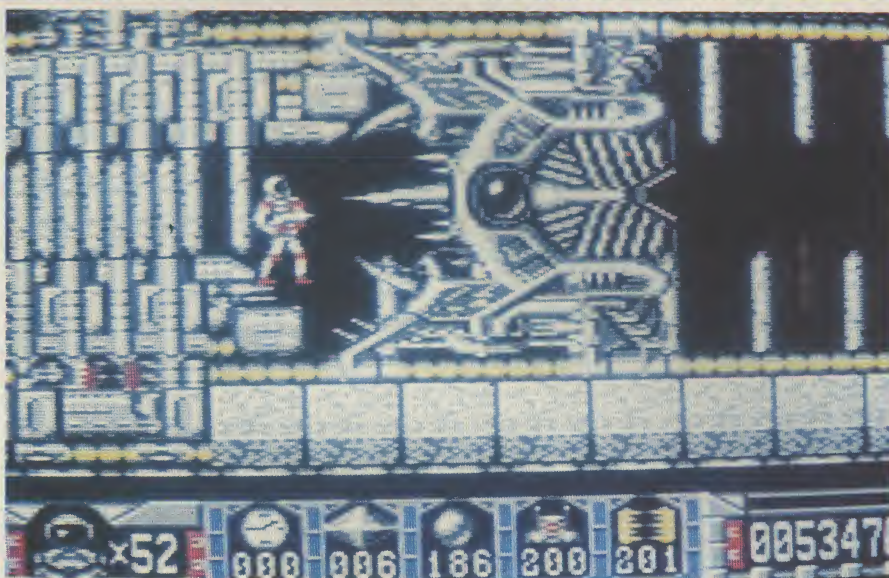
# CROCKS OF GOLD

ACE GETS TO THE END OF RAINBOW ARTS...

ACE travelled to Germany to visit the offices of Rainbow Arts - and discovered some software secrets that got us even more excited than the free lunch. A C64 game that looks as if it's running on an Amiga?? A new method of putting soundtracks on games?? And a CIGARETTE game?? It's all in the pot of gold at the end of the Rainbow...

**O**K, so we had SOME excuse. We were standing in one of the development studios of Rainbow Arts in Düsseldorf, just recovering from the flight and an oversized bratwurst. There were machines everywhere, all connected to different monitors. No chance of telling which program was running on which monitor. Suddenly this whopping great sprite menaced its way across one of the screens, chopping and sliding.

'That looks nice,' murmured your bratwurst victim, and wandered over to the Amiga to try and take control of the little fellow who was



**Yup, that nasty looking thing on the right is one big sprite, and yes, this is Turracane - running on a C64! If you saw how fast that thing could move, you'd be speechless!**

dancing around doing his best to destroy the vicious bit-mapped beastie.

There was a polite cough (in German) from Teut Weidemann - software development exec-

## TEUT TALK

**Teut Weidemann, Rainbow Arts' product development supreme gives us the nitty-gritty on...**

### 3D

We're keen to introduce 3D systems into areas where they have never been used before. Watch out for a 3D RPG and...wait for it...a 3D platform game. We're also working on a 3D hardware project for the arcades.

### FRACTALS

We'll be releasing a new fractal game through Lucas-films on the 16-bit machines in September 1990

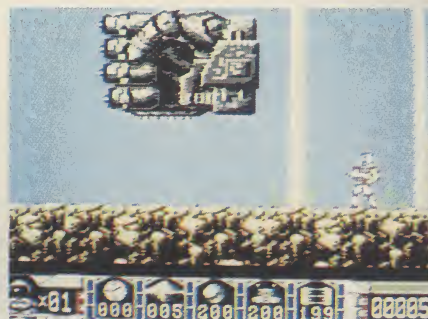
### ON THE CPC, THE SPECTRUM, AND THE ST

If I had my way, we'd burn the lot of them. By 1991, dead - along with the ST. The trouble with the ST was that the original spec wasn't good enough (single sided drives) and now everyone is forced into writing software for the lower spec machines because that's where the market is.

### ON THE NINTENDO GAMEBOY AND THE ATARI LYNX

Provided the Atari Lynx is properly marketed, the Gameboy doesn't stand a chance. The Americans want colour, and besides,

the spec of the Lynx is absolutely incredible (see article in this issue of ACE for more details). The Atari machine is also bigger than the Gameboy, and the Americans like things big.



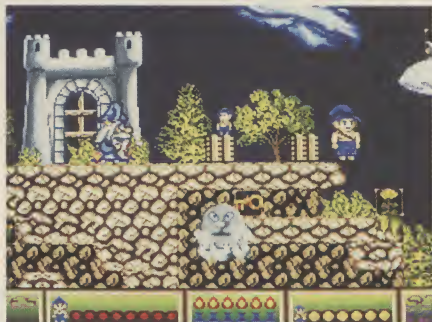
**Turracane again - that fist really flies! And the action's as smooth as it is fast.**

utive of Rainbow Arts. 'Actually,' he said, 'the program's running on that 64 over there.' 'Impossible,' we replied. 'Look at the size of that thing. You'd never get that skipping around on a C64. Perish the thought...'

We were wrong, of course. But when we'd recovered from the shock, worse was to come. The game in question, provisionally entitled Turracane, was programmed by Manfred Trenz - and it was only his SECOND game! His first one was Denaris on the Amiga and, well this is a bit depressing, chaps, but the fact is he did the entire program (his first ever) in six weeks.

Turracane is pretty monstrous in more ways than one. First, the action is very smooth. We were a bit dubious when Rainbow Arts claimed that the frame rate was 50Hz - on a C64?? Come on, pull the other frankfurter, chum - but further inspection and gameplay made the claim look disturbingly accurate.

The basic scenario involves battling your way through various landscapes, which range from the mountainous through the submarine to the gothic horror interior. The map is vast - in fact, we managed to get hold of Manfred's own sketch of it (see next page). And if you're wondering about the scale, we spent about 25 minutes crossing the first five peaks on the left-hand mountain range!



**Apprentice** – a very cutesy little number that involves block puzzles and arcade action.

### BREAKING THE LIMITS

With games like *Turricane* under development, and programmers like Manfred in chains, Rainbow Arts are obviously a force to be reckoned with. But we discovered that there was a lot more going in this small German office than we would ever have imagined. How about a 'cigarette game', for example? Apparently German cigarette company Philip Morris (producers of L&M cigarettes) asked RA to do a promotional game for them! It wasn't previewable, unfortunately, otherwise we could have given you a quick drag, but the idea sounded outrageous. 'We've had several approaches from big German companies to program promotional software for them,' said Teut, 'the attitude to computer games here in Germany isn't the same as it is in the UK.'

No, it certainly isn't, not when Microprose games get banned by the German government. Every game that goes on the shelf in Germany has to be vetted to be sure it doesn't encourage children to embark on a life of mass alien murder. 'It's not a serious problem for us,' said Teut, 'but we do have to remember the question of taste. However, we wouldn't really want to produce undesirable games in the first place.'

As if to underline this, one of the best titles that we saw in Düsseldorf was *Apprentice*. This is an extremely cute little number that takes the frolic factor from *Super Mario Bros* (though there's no similarity in gameplay) and combines it with the block puzzling elements of *Sokoban*, adding a good deal of attractive graphic diver-

sity in the process. The nicest touch here, as you bounce and climb around the landscape, was the little doppelganger – a tiny scaled-down version of the cutesy figure you control, who you can 'split off' from the hero and send off on adventures all of its own. This isn't just a gratuitous bit of idiosyncrasy, it actually serves to introduce a whole new set of puzzles in the game as you discover blocks that can only be accessed by someone of small size and vice-versa.

### SOUND SURPRISES

Rainbow Arts have also been turning their attention to the sound side of things with their recent release *Rock And Roll* (reviewed in this issue). Following from their experience with R&R, RA have developed a new system for storing and using samples in games that could have a dramatic effect on the music we hear while we play.

Most players will probably have already heard sampled sound tracks on games. Some of the most notorious recent examples have been the *Psygnosis* titles *Shadow of the Beast* and *Blood Money*, not to mention *Xenon II's* megablast. However, sampled sound eats up quite a bit of memory and you're unlikely to get a very long, non-repeating sampled sound track as you blast away.

Until now, that is. RA have developed a system that actually scans the samples and breaks them up into small sections. These sections are then stored and referenced by a look-up table. Combining this system with other compression methods means that we can expect to get some very long, high-quality sampled soundtracks in the near future. Doubtless other software houses will be disassembling every RA product that comes their way in an effort to duplicate the system.

'Our next effort, now we have that system, is to draft in professional musicians to write scores for games in the same way that people write scores for movies. We want the music to mirror exactly the action of the game and to contribute to the atmosphere by being appropriate – not just by being loud. We have a good start here since our music programmer, Chris Hulsbeck, is the German equivalent of Rob Hubbard.' Can't be bad.



**Mark Ulrich**, founder of Rainbow Arts, started the company while he was still at school. By the time he was 17, he had three employees. Seems like he spends most of his money on shirts...

### THE POT OF GOLD

OK, so the software we saw was impressive. But good games come and go, and often the companies that produce them just disappear in the mists of time, eh what? However, Rainbow Arts actually managed to get us even more excited about their future plans than about their current products.

'We can't go on just doing the sort of games we're doing now,' claims Teut. 'The problem is that we've already reached the technological limits of the C64. Once you get someone like Manfred achieving 50 frames a second there really isn't anywhere else to go. There's gameplay of course, but we already have (literally) a bible of gameplay rules that all our programmers work to. So we have to look elsewhere...'

Teut reckons that after the release of *Conqueror*, *Turricane*, and *Apprentice*, Rainbow Arts will have reached the end of an era. From the middle of next year, their programming teams will start to explore brave new worlds of programming. Teut is a Macintosh fan so he's already been impressed by the advantages of such hypergames as *Cosmic Osmo* (see ACE Issue 24) and he's dead keen to steer an exciting course through new gamestyles.

'The first thing we're going to do is a project concerning a highly complex fantasy sports simulation. I can't say any more than that, but imagine the adrenalin of sport mingled with the detail of simulation and the atmosphere of fantasy. After that, we're heading out into scientific RPG territory. We've already begun to develop techniques that will enable us to generate and simulate entire galactic systems – far larger than anything we've seen to date.'

'Our aim is to be able to release our games over different media. After all, we make games out of films – why shouldn't we make films out of games? We're determined to put into our titles sufficient originality and design to ensure that they can be converted into other entertainment media.'

There's no doubt that RA, now one of the most successful European software houses outside the UK, have the means to pursue these aims. Despite an air of secrecy, it's clear that they are already investigating the possibilities of dedicated hardware, CD-I, and other game media. Watch this space...



**The world of *Turricane*** – Involves falling down chutes, underwater battles, and mountainous challenge!

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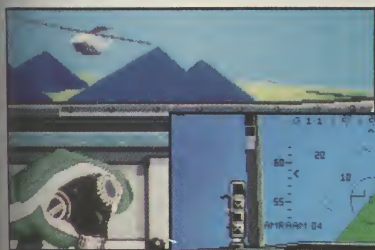
– 5 star game – New Computer Express.

**'F-16 Combat Pilot pulls out all the stops'**

– game of the month, The Games Machine.

I'm primed for action as my F-16 leaves the runway. This time my mission is to destroy a battalion of tanks. Suddenly, threat warning – interceptors closing fast! I quickly select dogfight mode and arm a Sidewinder. We both fire at the same time – chaff and a high-g turn out manoeuvres his missile. A loud explosion tells me he's not so lucky.

## F-16 COMBAT PILOT



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Colour/Shield	Red			*			*			*		*					*		*
Green	*								*			*					*		
Blue					*			*			*				*				
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Club						*	*	*	*										
Heart										*	*	*	*						
Diamond											*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Attributes																			
Strength	35	34	33	36	19	19	16	18	24	24	23	25	16	16	13	18			
Agility	17	21	26	23	23	22	24	23	18	20	18	20	32	31	32	36			
Intelligence	13	15	14	16	38	35	36	31	18	18	21	23	14	19	20	16			
Charisma	13	15	13	11	14	20	17	19	35	35	36	35	18	18	11	15			
Hit Points	35	37	32	35	18	16	17	17	24	25	24	26	24	23	20	22			
Vitality	31	26	28	38	26	23	25	25	24	25	23	27	19	22	18	25			
Armour	5	7	8	8	10	10	10	10	9	9	7	9	10	10	6	9			
Spell Points	6	7	7	8	23	21	22	19	9	9	10	11	7	9	10	8			
Spells							*		*										
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Long sword	*	*	*	*															
Staff					*	*	*	*											
Short sword									*	*	*	*							
Dagger														*	*	*	*	*	*
Food and mead	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

away the weapons, food, money, and keys. Dismiss them and kill them. When you have done that to all twelve extra characters, recruit your last character and start the game.

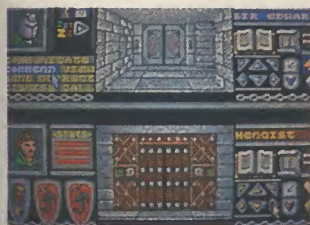
(2) It will be necessary to put some of the equipment in a safe place where you can find it, i.e. a shelf, until you have recruited the last champion to your party as you cannot carry it all whilst recruiting and killing the last few champions.

(3) Due to lack of space each champion has to carry things. Have one champion carrying all the keys and two champions carrying the money, as this will give you an extra five pockets to use.

(4) On the map near the keep entrance is a man (next to W1), this man will buy your extra weapons, but do haggle with him, even resort to Smalltalk. Use info under W1 for amounts.

(5) After selling equipment you can get off him 4 chainmail armours, 2 leather shields, and 2 bucklers costing 12, 6, and 10 respectively.

**N**ow, how about tackling Mirrorsoft's well-received *Bloodwych*. This is made all the more easier by S.Sykes of Epsom, Surrey who provides a few helpful hints as well as a map of the Champion's Hall and entrance to the Keep with a chart showing the attributes of the champions at the beginning of the adventure.



(1) When starting off, choose the four champions you want, but only recruit three of them to start with. Go round the halls finding the others and recruiting them. Take

### HALLS OF THE CHAMPIONS

**S** = Shelf  
**WS** = Wooden slates  
**T** = Tapestries  
**(W** = Words)

**P** = Pillar  
**G** = Gate  
**No.s** = Champions  
**W1** = Dagger 5  
Leather shield 6

Swords 10  
Staves 8  
Leather 7  
Chain 12  
Shield 10

**W2** = Beyond lies the keep.

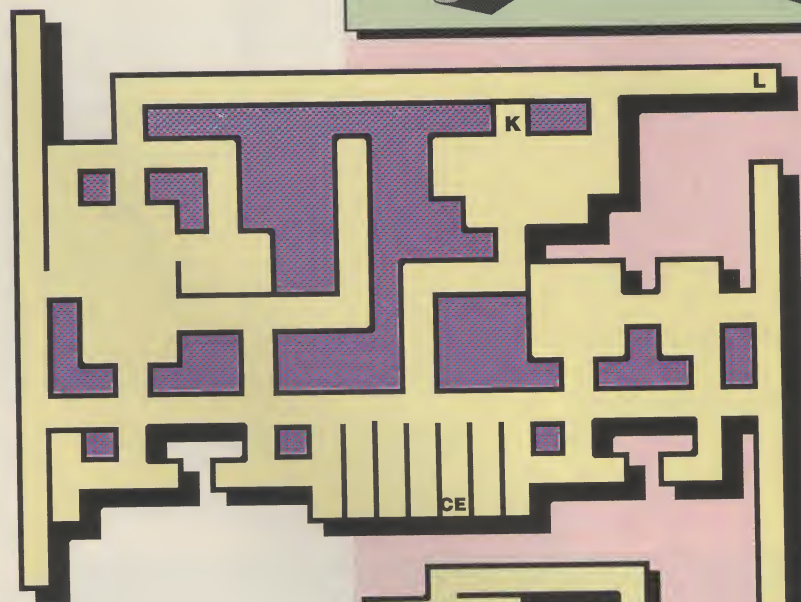
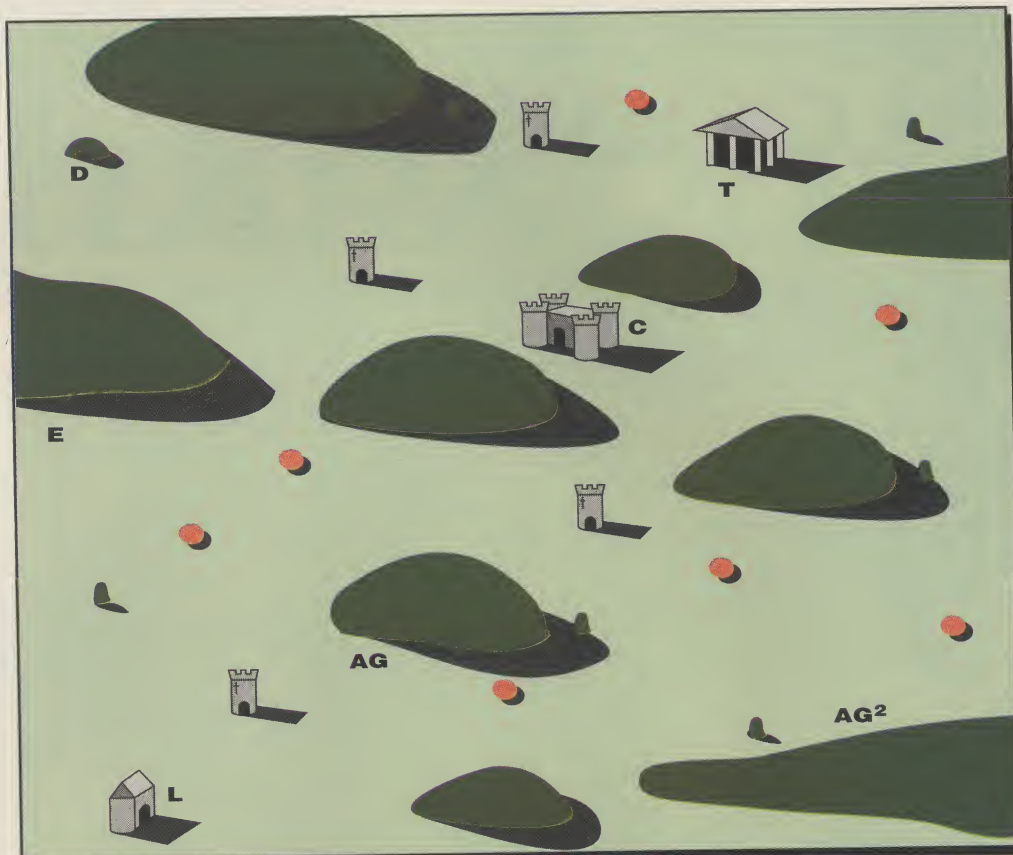


# GALDREGON'S DOMAIN

Still struggling through *Galdregon's Domain*? Thought so. Want to make some real progress? Thought so. Want to see the complete solution, sent in by Darren Martin of Hounslow, Middlesex? Thought so...

To get out of the castle you can either click on run, which takes you to the castle exit, or use the map.

You will need to go to places marked on the map, but in some places, e.g. the Forest of Elves, Temple of Set, and Labyrinth it is best to go all round (to build up armour, potions, scrolls, and weapons). Some maps do not show the entire area of the place.



## CASTLE

### KEY

**L** = HERE IS LICH HE HOLDS A GEM  
**K** = THIS IS WHERE THE KING IS AND WHERE YOU START  
**CE** = CASTLE ENTRANCE/EXIT

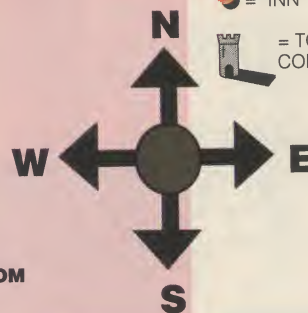
## MAIN MAP

### KEY

**C** = CASTLE  
**T** = TEMPLE OF SET  
**D** = CAVES OF DOOM  
**E** = FOREST OF ELVES  
**AG** = ASSASINS GUILD  
**AG2** = ASSASINS GUILD. HERE YOU WILL FIND THE LORD OF ASSASINS WHO HOLDS A GEM  
**L** = ENTRANCE TO THE LABYRINTH. THIS WILL ONLY APPEAR AFTER ALL OTHER FOUR GEMS HAVE BEEN COLLECTED

= INN

= TOWER. YOU CAN ONLY CONQUER 3 OF THESE



## CAVES OF DOOM

### KEY

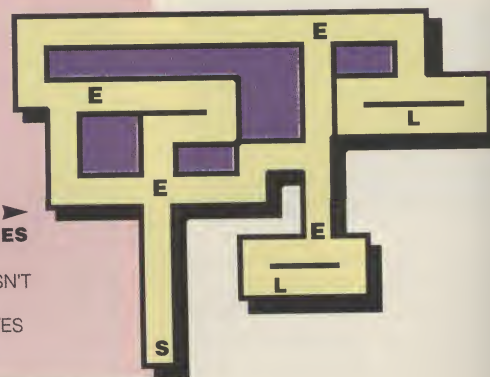
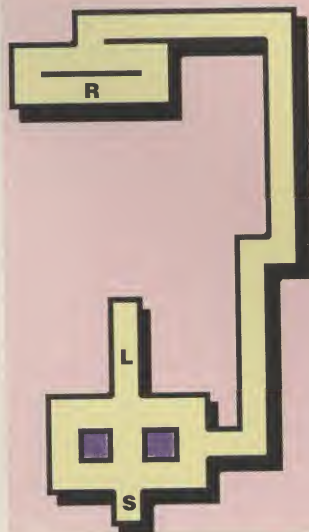
**R** = ROCK MONSTER IS HERE  
**L** = MOST LIKELY PLACE TO FIND THE LORD OF DWARVES  
**S** = START

## FOREST OF ELVES

### KEY

**E** = EAGLE. DOESN'T DO ANYTHING  
**L** = LORD OF ELVES

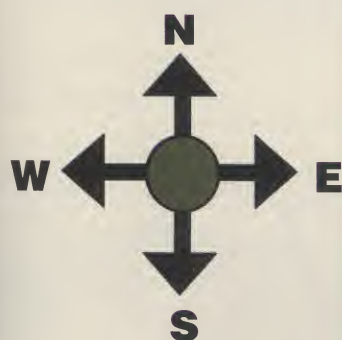
The first gem you should go for is the one that the rock monster carries in the Caves of Doom. The entrance to the Caves of Doom is near the top left section of the main map. Before you go off for the gem you should go into one of the one door inns near the bottom of the map. In one you will find a viking who gives you a magic sword. In the other is a wizard who gives you a book of spells. Do not waste spells (scrolls), use them wisely. Now go and conquer three of the towers. Next go to the Caves of Doom and now find the





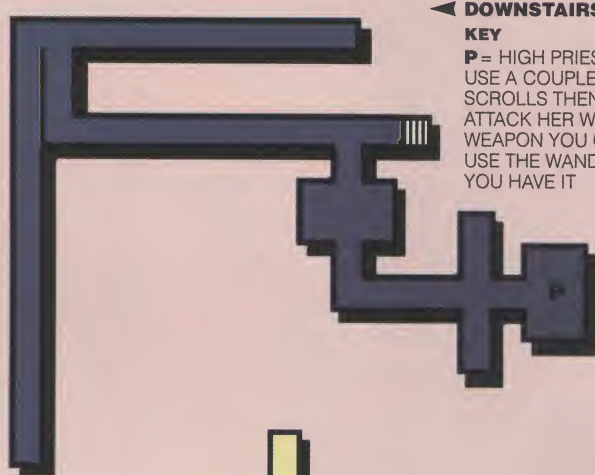
### THE TEMPLE OF SET

**KEY**  
**S** = START  
 |||| = STAIRS



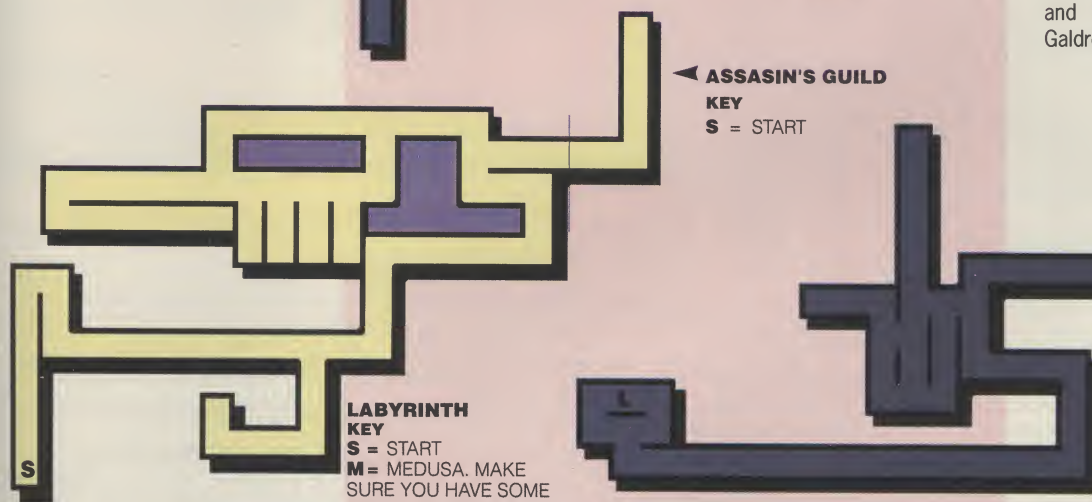
### DOWNSTAIRS

**KEY**  
**P** = HIGH PRIESTESS  
 USE A COUPLE OF  
 SCROLLS THEN  
 ATTACK HER WITH A  
 WEAPON YOU CAN  
 USE THE WAND IF  
 YOU HAVE IT



### ASSASIN'S GUILD

**KEY**  
**S** = START



### LABYRINTH

**KEY**  
**S** = START  
**M** = MEDUSA. MAKE  
 SURE YOU HAVE SOME  
 ATTACKING SCROLLS  
 LEFT, AND YOU HAVE  
 THE MIRROR

Lord of the Dwarves, kill him, nick his goodies then go and kill the rock monster.

After you have the gem and other weapons and armour, make your way to the Forest of Elves. The people are friends but they carry good armour, potions and scrolls so it is best to kill them. The Lord of the Elves carries the Elven cloak and money; kill any body you see in the Forest of Elves.

It is best to go all round the Forest of Elves and kill anyone you see.



Now it is off to the Temple of Set. If your energy (health, strength, stamina) is low, go to an inn with two doors and buy some booze and healing. Then off to the temple. Make sure you have some attacking scrolls (death, fireball, etc.) for use against the high priestess.

Make sure you go all round, especially to the large area on the east side before you go down the stairs. Make sure you get the necklace.

Make sure you have the cross. Now go to the castle. Go along the long corridor. On the way to Lich, when you're near it, you will see three ghost-type people standing in the room. Kill them, collect the gear, then carry on. Unlock the door and go in. The only one you have to kill is Lich (he looks the same as the three mentioned before). Nick his gear and teleport out. Go to the AG on the main map to build up money and weapons. Then go to AG2.

After you have got the other four gems you can then go to the Labyrinth. Use the wand to kill the minotaurs, make sure you get a key and a mirror off the minotaurs, as without the mirror the medusa will turn you to stone.

After killing the medusa get the gem, then teleport or find your way out. Then go back to the king and that's it, you've completed Galdregon's Domain!

### ASSASSINS' GUILD2

**KEY**  
**S** = START  
**L** = LORD OF  
 ASSASSINS. USE  
 SCROLLS, ABOUT  
 2 ON HIM, IF NOT  
 DEAD, THEN  
 ATTACK HIM WITH  
 WEAPON

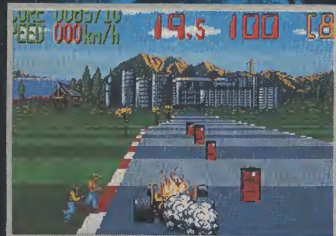


It may look like David and Goliath, but with these ACE tips you're only a stones throw from success.

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## GOLDEN OLDIE - ELITE

Fans of *Elite* who are having trouble making much progress in this excellent game will be pleased to see this cheat from Marco Verhoeven in Holland. While it gives you a helping hand, it won't spoil the game for you.

When you want to jump more than the allowed range you should do the following:

Equip yourself with anything you need and launch. Outside the station choose galactic chart (F5) and click on a planet in the circle.

When you move the mouse around and press 'D' you get planets that aren't in your range. When you hyperspace click on a planet in your range and position the cursor on a planet you found with 'D'. Now hyperspace and press 'D'. It's a bit tricky because you can't use the mouse in hyperspace, so you'll have to choose a planet before you hyperspace.

My personal record is 112.4 light years. To accomplish this there's a slightly different method.



You'll have to choose a planet and click on local. Now the circle will be around the chosen plan-

et. If you now press 'D' you'll get much greater distances to jump. But still choose a planet with-

in range and after that choose local.

## OOPS!

Back in issue 25 we printed the solution to *Battletech* but forgot to tell you which master games play-



er had provided it. Sorry! Slapped wrists all round. It was in fact Adam Morley of Leicester. A name to take note of because it's one you're likely to be seeing quite regularly in this column in the future. Since we neglected to credit Adam when his solution appeared here's a quick plug in recompense. Adam's first novel, *RAVEN*, has just been published, so if you liked his *Battletech* solution rush out to your local bookshop right now and head straight for the SF shelves...

## CODE CRAZY

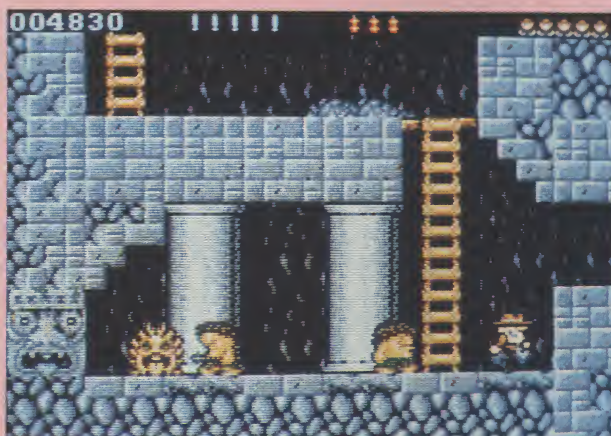
Steve Williams of Newton Aycliffe, County Durham helps out ailing games players with a few level codes.



THUNDERBIRDS (AMIGA, ST, C64, AMSTRAD, & SPECTRUM)  
PART:- 2> RECOVERY 3> ALOY-

## RICK DANGEROUS IS A CHEAT...

P. 'A megatip a day keeps the doldrums away' Fletcher says: 'Does getting through previous levels get tedious? Thought so. Just enter POOKY on the high score table and you are given the option to start on any level up to the furthest you can reach.' Well, now you know.



## ...AND SO IS SAVAGE HAWKEYE!

More help from Holland. This time it's for *Hawkeye* and *Savage* on the ST courtesy of Jan Jansen.

*Hawkeye*: Pause the game when playing, press the **HELP** key and start playing again by pressing the joystick button. Now you have infinite lives. If you press the + key on the keypad you will enter the next level.

*Savage*: Right at the beginning of game one (blue sector) you will find a well on the left. Run towards it and jump before you hit the wall. Now you will find yourself at the other side of it. Keep on walking to the left and you will notice the screen going crazy. Waggle the joystick in all directions and after a while you will find yourself in the red sector. Once in the red sector do the same as in the blue sector. Now you go to the purple sector. Do the same as in the red and blue sectors. A message appears that you have completed game one and the code word for game two is also shown there. That word is "SABATTA".

Hmmm! Sounds like a bug to me, but what the hell... it works! Thanks Jan, keep them coming.



SIUS 4> ANDERSON

NAVY MOVES (AMIGA & ST)  
PART:- 2> 786169

SAVAGE (AMIGA & ST)  
PART:- 2> SABATTA  
3> PORSCHE

## WORLD GAMES ON THE CPC 464

And now, assistance for Amstrad gamers from Andrew Dalloway of Kinswinford in the West Midlands.

- 1 LOAD BARREL JUMPING.
- 2 SET THE BARRELS TO 20.
- 3 KEEP FIRE BUTTON PRESSED WHILE SKATER'S LEGS ARE BEING MOVED.
- 4 WHEN THE BLACK FLAG APPEARS AT THE EDGE OF THE SCREEN THE SKATER AUTOMATICALLY JUMPS.
- 5 KEEP THE FIRE BUTTON PRESSED WHILE THE SKATER JUMPS OVER THE FLAG.
- 6 PULL THE JOYSTICK DOWN WHEN THE SKATER BEGINS TO FALL (KEEP THE FIRE BUTTON PRESSED THE ENTIRE TIME).
- 7 THE SKATER LANDS IN FRONT OF THE BARRELS. YOU CAN TAKE YOUR FINGER OFF THE FIRE BUTTON NOW.

Can I? Oh good. Ever onwards...

# CONSOLE CORNER

Yes folks, it's back again... that saviour of Console owners everywhere. The ultimate friend for firmware addicts. Yep, It's Console Corner.

In this month's corner we have some very comprehensive tips for Sega owners from the cunning console crew down in Caerphilly, Mid-Galmorgan: Jojo Cicero and Mark Cook.

## R-TYPE

**1.i** To make your R-9 indestructable (before you turn on the power-base) press down-right on control pad 1 and press up-left and button 1. Do this simultaneously and holds them down until the R-Type logo appears on the screen. Now let go and start the game as usual.



**ii** To defeat **Krell** fire your droid unit into his stomach, then move up to the top eye and keep rapidly firing.

**iii Gomanda.** Collect the reflecting laser force, then move just above his blue eye and rapidly fire. If the snake gets close move to the top-left.

**iv Mega Battleship.** Collect the reflecting laser force and place it on your back. Move carefully around the ship and prepare a full laser beam. Wait until the generator peels back then let the beam in.

**v Monpaia.** Collect the reflecting laser force. Fit it on your back. Aim for the 90 degree angle and fire rapidly. The other two are straight forward, just aim for the green windows.

**vi Kraken.** Collect the anti-land laser force and prepare a full beam. When the rock appears, fire your beam and orb. Keep firing and dodging the rocks, this way he is easier to defeat.

**vii** There is no boss so collect the anti-air laser force. Move your R-9 to the backward "L" and position it so it is half and half. Let off the droid unit and keep firing. You should not get hit.

**viii Buronka.** Collect the anti-air laser force, put it on your back. Keep firing and dodging, it is easier to do this level like this.

**xi Byte.** You can collect any laser force here. Wait until he opens his mouth and fire your droid unit inside. Keep firing rapidly and dodging. You should defeat him easily.

**2.** To get to the super stage go to level 4 and when the mechanical cells fill the screen there are two pillars at the top. Reverse into the first pillar. The screen should flash and now you enter the super stage.

**Super Stage Boss.** Just aim for his eyes. These are his weakness. Watch out for the balls he fires out of his mouth.

**3.** To get the **soundtest**, rotate the D-button clockwise a couple of times. If you want sound effects press button 2 and press right on sound-test 17.

To gain extra **continues** rotate the D-button anti-clockwise on the continue option. You can gain a total of 12 continues.

## VIGILANTE

### TRICKS

To choose a round:- When the title screen is showing, press both buttons and up-left on CD1. Keep these down. Your round can now be selected by pressing up and down.

When fighting boss two, first go to the van and let him jump you. Then, no matter how far from you he is, and provided you duck and punch, he can be hit! (This only works when he is to your left).

### TACTICS

The 'chokeholder' thugs can be jumped to avoid combat.

To fly-kick, press both buttons while running, then sharply press up, still holding buttons 1 and 2. To fly punch, repeat but press down as opposed to up.

If you get to a boss with no nunchakas



you can safely go back for them with no thugs challenging you either way.

### Level 1

1. Jump all chokeholders before fighting a knifer, chainman, etc.
2. To kill boss, grab nunchakas, hit him in the right corner and hit him rapidly. His energy diminishes more than normal.

### Level 2

1. See level 1 tip 1.
2. To kill boss, use the aforementioned cheat, but as soon as you've had three hits on him jump toward him and repeat the cheat!

### Level 3

1. See level 1 tip 1.
2. Motorbikes — don't hit the riders off, just keep jumping them and moving forward and pretty soon they'll stop coming. Don't land in their smoke or their fires (after the bikes blow up) or you'll lose energy.

To kill boss, ignore his mace and jump into him. Duck and punch immediately. After two hits, jump back out and wait for him to run into you. Repeat the process.

### Level 4

1. Guess what? Level 1. Tip 1.
2. To kill boss, dodge his dynamite and fly-punch him up on his ledge. When he jumps down, keep fly kicking him, running back, fly kicking him, etc. until he dies.

### Level 5

1. Yep. Level 1...
2. To kill boss, grab nunchakas and duck. The boss will walk towards you and before he can kick you, hit him with the nunchakas. Repeat until he dies.

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Hopefully we shall be hearing a lot more from these two wizes in future corners. Keep 'em peeled.

## A SWEDISH CHEAT - CARRIER COMMAND

Pause the game and type "The Best is yet to Be". Now you are in the cheat mode.

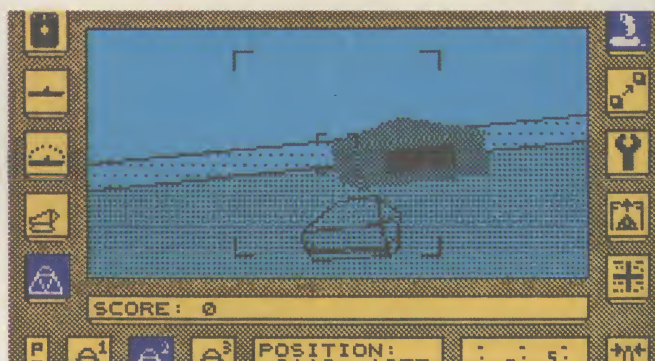
9=SURPRISE

7=SPEED UP THE GAME

6=SHOW ALL THE COLOURS, ETC, IN THE GAME

Try also pressing **CTRL** and **M** for a surprise. Try also "Grow old along with me" and press "+". To go back in the normal game press "+".

Thanks to Joseph Musoke of Stockholm, Sweden for that little gem.



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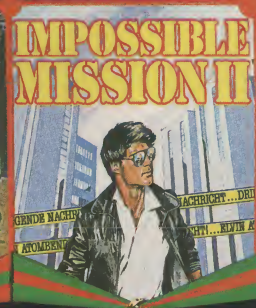
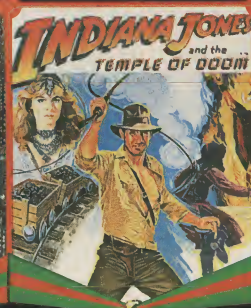
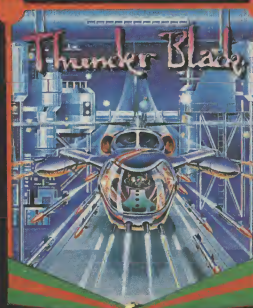
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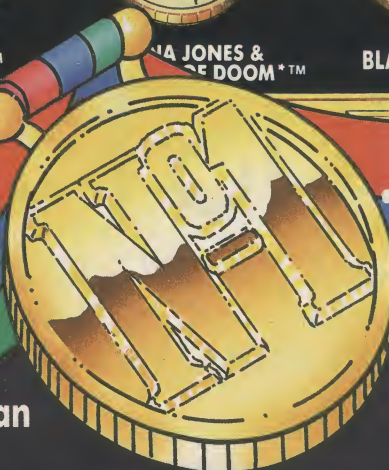
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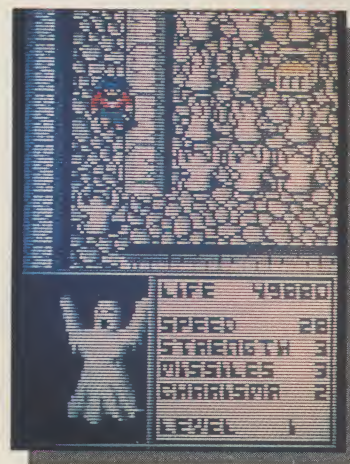
SEE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 192 OR CALL 0733 555161

# COMPETITION

ACE AND ATARI HAVE A BRAND NEW LYNX HAND-HELD CONSOLE TO GIVE AWAY...

## THAT'S HANDY!

Here's a chance to get your hands on the incredible Atari Lynx colour hand-held games console...



**A**s revealed back in ACE Issue 23, the new Atari Lynx hand-held console in one of the sexiest games decks to be released in years, and now we give you the chance to own this handy piece of hardware, thanks to those generous guys at Atari.

The Lynx was first unveiled at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago, where it astounded the gameplaying world with its impressive array of features and technical specifications.

The Atari Lynx is the world's first colour hand-held games console with a 3.5" LCD screen, resolution of 160x102 pixels, processor running at 16MHz, 64K DRAM, 16 megabyte game carts, multi-player options and custom graphics and sound chips producing 16 colours on screen out of a palette of 4096 and four channel stereo sound.

Among the games due for release on the Lynx are *California Games* and *Impossible Mission* and *Treasure Chests* – plus a myriad of other game titles from third party developers.



Although the Lynx was launched last month in the States, Atari won't be releasing it in the UK till early next year... but ACE readers don't have to worry or wait, because you can WIN a LYNX now by entering our simple competition.

### WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO...

Winning the Atari Lynx couldn't be simpler! In fact, it's as simple as 1, 2, 3...

1. What year was Atari founded?

(a) 1972 (b) 1967 (c) 1901

2. What computer, console or coin-op game would you like to see converted to the Atari Lynx? Why?

3. And finally... we want you to give us a gameplaying tip for your all-time favourite game – it can be on computer, console or coin-op. For example: Have you found a hidden cheat mode or a bug? What about a well tested tactic to get past that difficult part? Is there a secret level?

Please write your answers (in BLOCK CAPITALS) on the back of a postcard. Don't forget to include your full name, address and telephone number.

Send your completed postcard to:

ACE LYNX COMPETITION, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

#### THE PRIZE

The Atari Lynx will be awarded to the first correct entry drawn at random from those received prior to the closing date.



On seeing the crumbling estates, out-dated roads and rusty bridges of your city, how many times have you said "Put me in charge for a day and I'll make this wretched thing work!" Now, with Sim City, take the destiny of the world's greatest cities in hand. Or take charge of a new evolving and growing city. Become both mayor and city planner of a dynamic real-time simulation.



Build houses, streets, factories, airports, a stadium, or even nuclear power plants. Organise urban transport, hire police, firemen, bulldoze entire neighbourhoods.

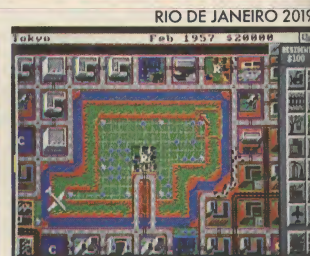
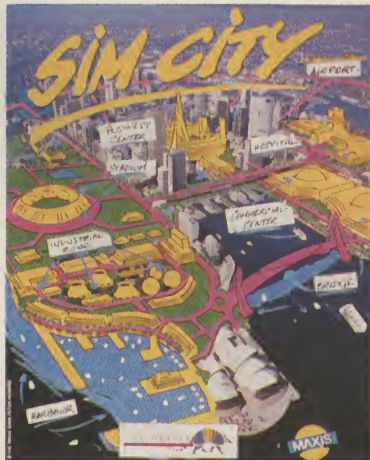
Raise and collect taxes, balance your budget, manipulate property values. Sim City is alive. It's loaded with animation and detailed sound effects. Build roads, cars appear. Lay tracks, trains go. Build an airport, planes fly. Neighbourhoods go upper-class. Areas deteriorate into slums. Small industries grow into huge factories. Everything is managed and animated in real



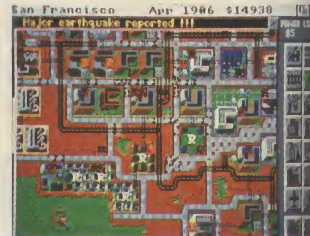
Tax Rate	7%
Collected	\$764
Fire	100%
Police	100%
Transit	100%
Cash Flow	\$447
Prev Funds	\$5,866
Current Funds	\$5,447

## SIM CITY

What you should know about the game of the year.



time. Every decision instantly influences the life of your town. In a special mode, you can even cause tornadoes, floods, fires and other disasters at your whim. Save San Francisco from the great earthquake of 1906. Or save Tokyo of pollution and from his famous B-movie monster. Sim City is an all-absorbing unique game which contains 8 pre-defined scenarios : e.g San Francisco, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro... With it's exceptional depth of play, it's still simple to play with icons and graphics, without text commands.



Design and build the city of your dreams. Sim City gives you the keys. The rest is up to you.

INFOWORLD Volume II Issue 20 : "People playing Sim City are completely plugged into the world they create, disappearing for hours."  
NEW YORK TIMES : "The model is very sophisticated, yet understandable. And just as important, it's fun, too."



# INFOGRAMES



# UP-BEATS

JON BATES REVEALS NEW MUSICAL DEVELOPMENTS AT THE PC SHOW

What's new in the world of computer music? Cards for the PC, bolt-ons for all micros, sexy new software, and a system that could, if used to its full potential, set you back £2500 just for the MIDI leads! Jon Bates tunes in to this year's PC Show...

If you were one of the hordes who attended this year's PC show at Earls Court then you could not escape the fact that music software was out in force. Once you had negotiated your ears past the lethal bombardment of the multitude of games they were subject to further battering from the music area (unimaginatively called the Music and Micros area); a whole section of stands, each one with soft and hardware plus synths and samplers all set at stun volume. To cap it all, Atari had a huge bank of TV screens backing a stage with feature regular demonstrations of the new Steinberg sequencing package, Cubase from Tony Hastings (ex Cutting Crew). Here's what went down...

## BOLT ON BOOGIE...

Ever since someone first complained about the Spectrum's sound chip (probably the first person to own a Spectrum), hardware manufacturers have been selling us little bolt-on goodies that will enhance the musical performance of our micros. In recent months these add-ons have been reappearing for the new 16-bit mar-

ket and some of them are very impressive indeed. 8-bit owners needn't despair either as several of these new units are simply modified MIDI kit that can be driven by any MIDI equipped micro, whether it be an Amstrad CPC plus EMR interface or a RAM Music Machine'd Spectrum.

## FM MELODY MAKER

Although designed for the ST only, this little beast shows the degree of crossover we're seeing now between the dedicated music market and the computer scene. Marketed by Hybrid Arts, the package consists of a cartridge that plugs into the side port on the ST and comes with playback and recording software.

The cartridge contains a sound chip that uses the same method of sound creation as the very successful Yamaha DX series of synthesisers, Frequency Modulation. It will give you up to 11 sounds simultaneously, which includes a drum kit. To get the best from the unit it would be best to have both an external amplifier and a MIDI keyboard. The latter then plugs into the computer's MIDI IN port and allows you to play any of the voices contained on the chip.

The recording software will let you play anything in and multi-track your performance into something chartable (optimism rules OK) and is an ideal entry level program into the world of sound and MIDI.

The package also has good MIDI facilities that will allow you to control and play other synths connected to the MIDI out port. Not bad for £69.95. Like many of the MIDI add-ons it can also be incorporated into games and there are several titles in preparation that will be able to use the cartridge as an extra sound generator.

## BLASTS WHILE YOU BLAST

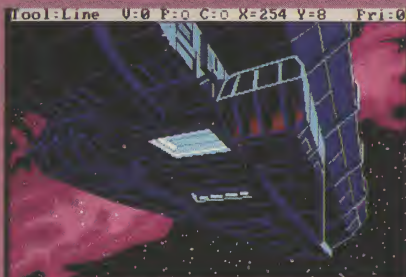
*King's Quest IV* not sounding quite right? Want to beef up your games performance with a spot of heavy duty sound? Several of the units mentioned on these pages will respond to data dished out by some of today's top games, giving you a full stereo sound-track.

The FM Melody Maker is, we are told, going to be supported by several software houses, and Sierra On-Line already support the MT32, Yamaha Music Feature PC card, and the Casio CZ series. Compatible software is also promised for the Games Blaster (as its name suggests) mentioned in this article.

As you can see on

these pages, prices for these units vary enormously, but if you're in the unfortunate position of tightening the belt on your piggy bank, you can at least take heart from the current trend, obvious on virtually every stand at the show and exemplified by recent releases such as *Blood Money* from Psygnosis, *Rock and Roll* from Rainbow Arts (see this issue), and *Xenon II*, for improving radically the quality of games sound tracks

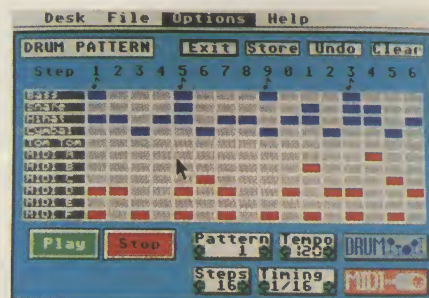
in general. Most of this is currently being done by using sampling, and new techniques for storing and compressing sound data mean that the music we hear while we slaughter the *Andropoids* will continue to develop dramatically over the next year.



Sierra On-Line's titles now come with glorious full-stereo MIDI sound tracks...



The FM Melody Maker from Hybrid Arts has plenty of options to customise the sounds. Each one can be assigned to a separate MIDI channel.



Setting up a drum pattern with FM Melody Maker. The grid rolls from left to right and each filled-in square represents a drum beat on the instrument listed on the left.



Sequencing on FM Melody Maker uses traditional music notation as well. Note the mixer in the lower left-hand corner which lets you balance the individual volumes of the sounds.

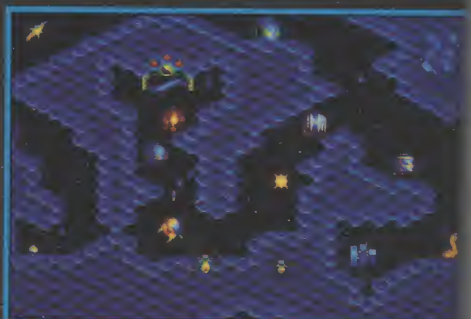
## ROCK AND ROLAND...

Undoubtedly some of the sexiest bolt-on bits at the show were coming out of the Roland stable. Ever since this company released its popular little MT32 sound module, a whole market of home computer users demanding quality sound sources on the cheap has sprung up.

To satisfy demand, Roland have put out a new range of synth modules designed specifically to run with all MIDI software and computers. Although not cheap by computer hardware standards, they are in effect repackaged versions of two of their most successful sound modules, the D110 LA synth (a beefier, rack-mounted MT32-alike) and the U110 sample player, both renowned for their excellent sounds.

The CM32L corresponds to the D110 and has 128 sounds plus 30 percussion voices and

# STRYX



REVIEWS

- ★ **Ultra smooth 8 way scrolling**
- ★ **Designed with small fully animated characters from Garvan Corbett, the artist who brought you the classic hit Barbarian**
- ★ **Multi-directional free format weapon usage**
- ★ **Large playfield for even more action.**

You're really up against it this time. Those revolting robots have finally upped and turned their horribly powerful weapons on their kind human masters. Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. I mean, you just can't have bloodthirsty Cyborg assassins roaming the streets of Dome City and expect the citizens to put up with it. Who on earth is going to sort out the mess? You guessed — you get the job.

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You'll have to work hard, though, blasting hordes of the revolting creatures (such a sad waste of scrap metal) and rescuing the keys to the Life force.

So, Stryx, you'd better get your jet pack on for some high level robot stomping through the immensely complex underground world of the Dome cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

AMIGA/ATARI ST £19.95

Screen Shots from the Atari ST Version

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33 sound effects plus adjustable digital reverb. This will set you back £369 but after all you are getting up to nine channels of professional quality sounds simultaneously. An equivalent synth keyboard, for example, would cost you around £800.

The CM32P inherits the role of the U110 and will perform six simultaneous parts of sampled sound with 64 sounds available, giving you a maximum of 31 notes at any one time. More sounds can be obtained by the greedy by purchasing sound cards which will cost £45 each in addition the £445 you have splashed out on the unit. For £749 you can have both modules in one box (the CM64) and a row with your bank manager.

### SAMPLING SAFARI

Samplers, those devices that digitally capture sound, let you edit it, and then play it back, are set to fall dramatically in price following the news that Cheetah, who have been pioneering a budget end of the market with low-cost keyboards, drum machines, and an analogue sound module, are now stabbing out at the sample market.

On offer will be a 16-bit dedicated sampler for under £800. This may sound a lot but the spec is comparable to units costing a very great deal more. The beast (displayed at PCS but not in operation) is a stand-alone number and not dependent on any computer to drive or edit it. It comes complete with a 3.5" drive and has the ability to play back multiple samples, as well as supporting a full MIDI specification. It will also accept disks from 'certain other' samplers. Should put the cat amongst the sample pigeons early next year...

### REPLAY REPLAY

Meanwhile, through Microdeal and the indefatigable Tony Racine, the man behind many a sampling program, there is a refined version of Replay now in its fifth version and called Replay Professional, costing £129.95 for the ST only. Its advantages over previous versions will be that the sound editing features are made much easier and simpler to use, the sound filters are greatly enhanced, and, most importantly of all, the sound is actually sampled in 12 bits and crunched down to 8 bits for the ST to store.

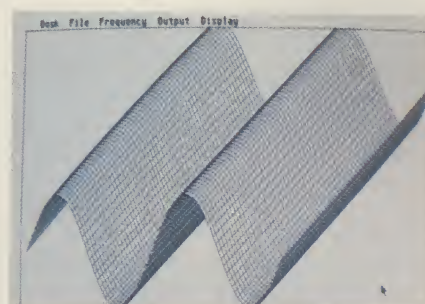


**Roland's CM64** - not many knobs, but wedges of sound, and all under computer control. More and more games are outputting MIDI soundtracks - a unit like this could put quite a punch into your playing...

Without going into great technical detail, the bottom line here is that the sound will be much smoother than before and will have a lot less background hiss. The new version will also allow you to play back four separate sounds simultaneously. Thrown in for good measure will be a sample sequencing program and also a MIDI keyboard with a reasonable degree of sophistication.

Heavy-duty ST sample freaks could check out the A16S Samplerack - a professional piece of hardware that comes as a separate lump all ready to bolt into a rack. Needless to say it works in stereo, comes with a sequencer and full MIDI features plus all the bells and whistles that you would expect for a shade under £600. This may seem very expensive, but you would probably pay considerably more than this for a separate sampling device and you would certainly not have the editing facilities that the A16S can give you. One for the serious purchaser though.

ST owners could also try out Quartet from Microdeal. For £49.95 you get a piece of software that will play up to four sampled voices



**Replay Professional** - no, it's not Origami with graph paper but a three dimensional display (fast Fourier transform) of a sine wave sample.

simultaneously and will store up to 20 samples in memory, dependent on the length of each one. It uses samples that are in the same format as the Replay range and there are plenty of these available in the Public domain if you can't create your own using the Replay package. The program also includes sequencing and graphic sample editing facilities.

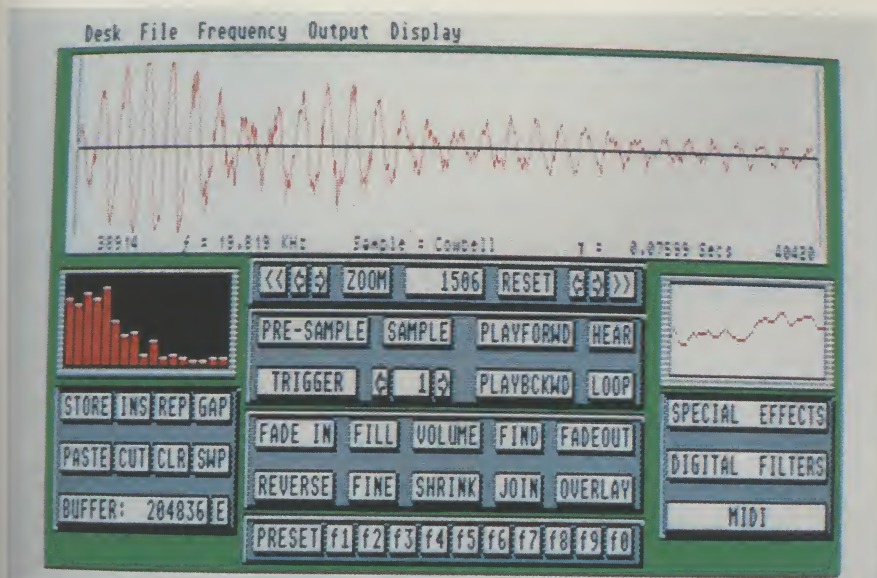
### MUSIC-X JUNIOR

Rumours abound that the all-encompassing Music X sequencing, sampling, and voicing program (reviewed last month) will soon be available in smaller and hence cheaper forms. The word is that SDL will be making a Junior version available for under £100. Having got you hooked on that you can then save up and buy the additional software modules to add to the program and build up to the full version. It's a bit like a Lego kit - you start with Junior and build your dog kennel; finally you end up with Master Builder edition that will construct a fully-working model of the Space Shuttle in your bedroom.

### INTO THE FUTURE

Apart from the move towards improving the sound quality of games and a desire to sample anything that so much as squeaks, the other interesting trend at the PC Show was the development of the multi-tasking or interactive environment for the computer.

Whilst it has been possible for several programs to share the memory space and let you jump from one to the other, it has not neces-



The main control screen of **Replay Professional**. The main sample covers the upper half of the screen whilst a harmonic analysis is displayed on the lower left and filtering characteristics on the right.

## CROTCHETS...

Wandering round the show, every so often something crops up that makes you think twice...or thrice...

Such as Pandora Technology's Archimedes program that allows you to control up to 250 MIDI instruments simultaneously. Always supposing that you could actually afford 250 MIDI instruments, this sounds pretty nifty. But then suddenly the thought crops up...wait a moment: a single MIDI lead can set you back as much as £10. Anyone out there want to spend £2500 on leads??!

...or what about the chap who sidled up to us while we listened to Steinberg's Cubase being demoed and offered us a pirated version, less dongle, for under a quarter of the price. Sounds great, until you realise that (a) it won't store the sound in the proper format and (b) certain functions will therefore seize up and (c) you will then lose your work and (d) Steinberg will not be altogether happy to get you out of the mess and (e) it won't work with any of the upgrades. Suddenly the bargain sounds a wee bit pricey...

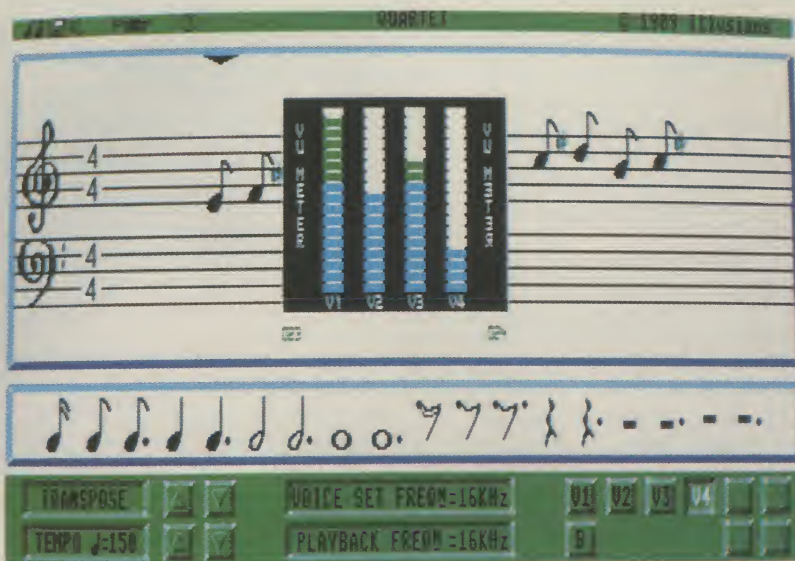
sarily been the case that an action performed on one program will also affect the reaction of another program, which is in fact running simultaneously in the background.

The usual example quoted by the developers of these systems is where you are playing a tune from a MIDI sequencer and you decide that the sound of the synth is not quite right. Quick as a flash you jump to the synthesiser sound editor which is also running at the same time as the sequencer. Without a pause for breath you are able to change the synth sound and hear the effect. The main controls for either program can be overlaid onto each other.

The initial reaction is that this may all be well and good for those who have pots of filthy lucre to waste but is it a case of a solution looking for a problem? Whilst at present this may appear to be the case, the history of computer developments shows that things get spun off down the range and are subject to a good deal of refining in the process.

At present there are several companies developing and marketing such systems specifically for MIDI and music; Steinberg with M.ROS, C Lab with SoftLink and Hybrid Arts who are marketing a system called CHAOS. With the exception of M.ROS they are destined for the ST only. M.ROS is also being developed for the PC and the Mac.

The general consensus of opinion is that with such common operating systems controlling programs it is possible to have two or more computers interlinked, both running separate music programs that in all probability will be written by different software developers. As faster and more powerful computers arrive you will not feel forced to send your present workhorse to that great knackers' yard in the sky on the grounds that it cannot compete. Rather, it can be networked into the multitasking system and not merely synchronised but actually act and react with the other units, thanks to a common operating system. And



Mixing and sequencing the sampled sounds on Quartet.

with a bit of luck your present software will not become redundant but will be part of a bigger, ever developing mega-system.

### CONTACTS

Hybrid Arts	01 883 1335
Microdeal	0726 68020
Data Liberation Ltd	0983 864674

Roland	01 568 4578
Cheetah	0222 555525
EMR	0702 335747
Pandora Technology	01 221 9653
SDL	01 300 3399
Steinberg (Evenlode)	099 389 228
C-Lab (Sound Technology)	0462 480000

## PLAY YOUR CARDS...

If you've got a PC, you can now choose from one of several cards available for the machine, each of which offers the chance of boosting your musical street cred. The trend for these cards started with the Yamaha Music Feature card, effectively a DX synth on a card, but it was rather expensive. There are now several cheaper alternatives...

### GAMES BLASTER

The Games Blaster is a half size card, not amazingly cheap at £119 (the US version is only \$129 - a pretty shameful exchange rate which deserves to start a vigorous grey import market). It can play back 12 sounds simultaneously but delivers the sound at only 2.5 watts. This may be OK over headphones but through stereo speakers (not provided) it is positively weedy. You will need to hook it through a hi-fi system to give it any credibility. The sounds aren't bad, using a simple form of

Frequency Modulation for their creation.

There are plans afoot to release an upgraded version of the Games Blaster in the not too distant future which, although costing more, will have greatly enhanced sound capabilities, using FM plus the ability to sample sound. The upgrade, entitled Sound Blaster, was having its first airing at the show and was an improvement in many ways on its predecessor. As well as running with compatible games it supports MIDI and comes with a whole host of software to turn the PC into a sort of single keyboard with lots of auto-playing features and libraries of jolly tunes to sing along with! Watch this space for further details \_ and more information from Data Liberation Limited (contact numbers at the end of this article).

### LAPC-1

An expensive beast this, but still an attractive proposition for well-heeled and musical-

ly inclined PC owners, the LAPC-1 is a full-size card that is in effect the more elderly and popular MT-32 sound module. This beast gives you digital reverb as well as loads of excellent sounds and 32 note polyphony (using simple sounds - the polyphony reduces as you create more complex voices). However, you'd probably need to measure the benefits in terms of desk top space rather than finance as the card will cost £379 and if you shop around you can't get an MT32 (which is around three years old now) for about £200 second hand.

### PC REPLAY

Sampling freaks might like to check out PC Replay, a half-size card which also includes a MIDI interface plus all the ports required for happy sampling. It'll set you back £149.95 and you should make sure you've got a hard disk as well otherwise it will eat its way through available memory

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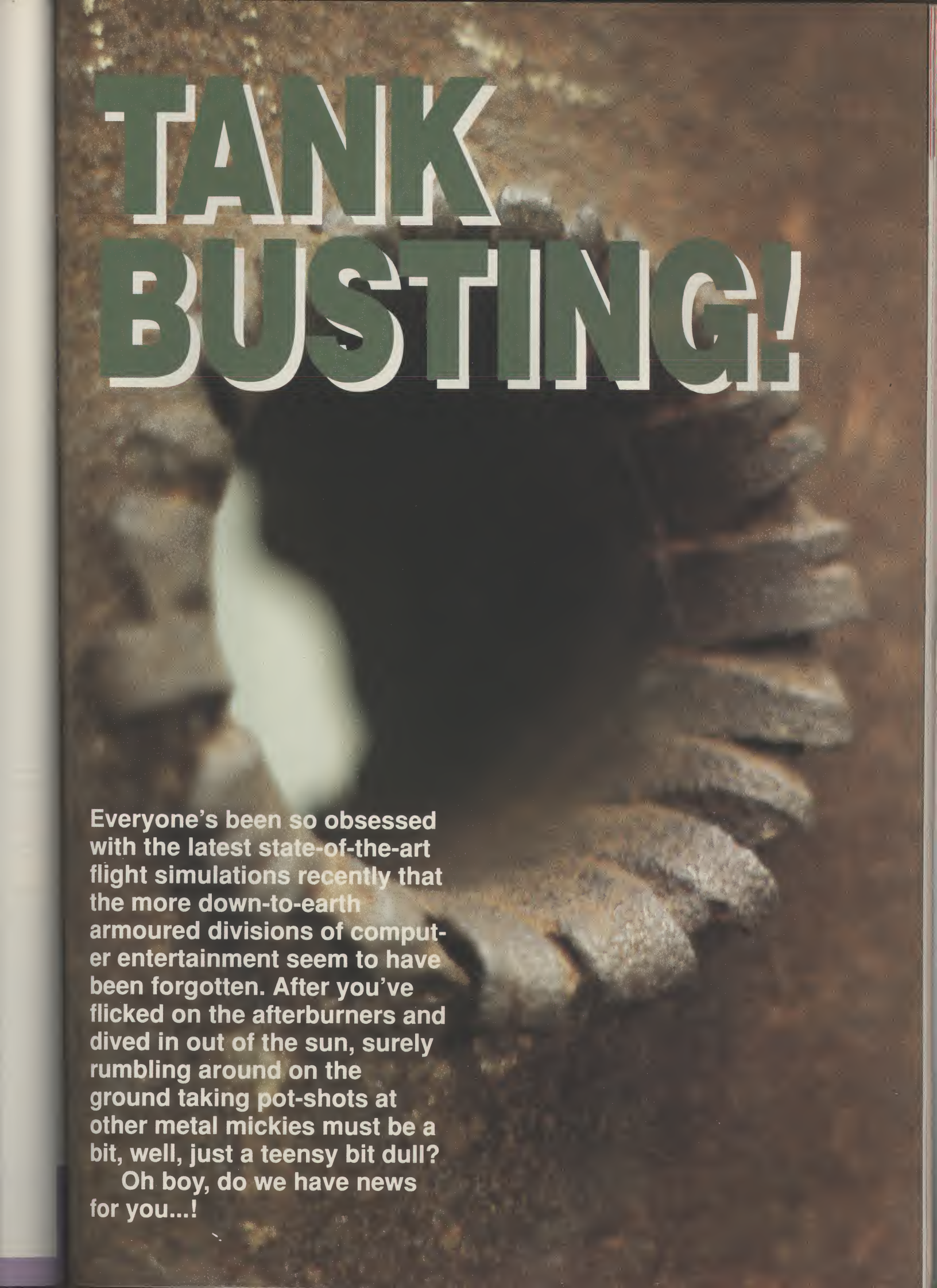
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# TANK BUSTING!



Everyone's been so obsessed with the latest state-of-the-art flight simulations recently that the more down-to-earth armoured divisions of computer entertainment seem to have been forgotten. After you've flicked on the afterburners and dived in out of the sun, surely rumbling around on the ground taking pot-shots at other metal mickies must be a bit, well, just a teensy bit dull?

Oh boy, do we have news for you...!

Advanced tank design, as on this recent example, is particularly suited to advanced 3D displays! The angular shielding, designed to deflect as well as resist bombardment, has a nice filled vector look even in real life! M1TP offers a high degree of detail in the display, but you can toggle the level of detail to suit different machines. The more detail, the more processing power you need...

Anyone who remembers the shock of seeing their windscreen shatter after receiving a shell up the rear in *Battlezone* will know that tank busting can result in almost terminal adrenalin doses – and the good news is that the software boys are about to ram this lesson home with several promised heavy-duty tank simulations. Microprose's is the first to appear, Realtime's *Tank Command* is poised for release, and there are others rumbling along the track. What's all the fuss about?

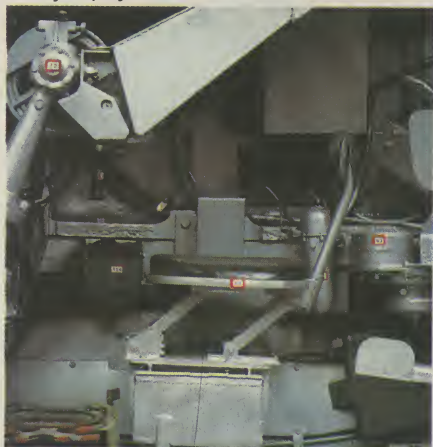
ACE first got its hands on a copy of Microprose's M1 Tank Platoon during a visit to the Bovington Tank Museum in the company of 'Prose's Major 'Wild Bill' Stealey. We were pretty impressed by the speed of the game, the detailed 3D VGA display, the choice of heavy-weight armour you could fling about, and the even heavier weight 206pp manual, which must be getting on for an industry record.

In fact the manual just about sums up the new era of tank sims. Things may be slower on the ground, but that simply means more opportunity for strategy and game detail. None of those 206 pages are wasted, and every one tells you something useful about the game – yet it's a tribute to the program design in M1 Tank Platoon that you can get down to playing immediately. What's more, the detail in the game, which ranges from the explanation of and opportunity to indulge in conventional tank tactics to the muzzle velocity of the 7.62mm PKT Medium Machine Gun, isn't fiction – Microprose had to invoke the Freedom Of Information Act in the States to get the necessary documentation released, and they've made excellent use of it.

Our only niggle here was the quality of the manual binding, which appeared to shed pages at an alarming rate. The manual's pretty essential, however, so we ended up hole-punching all the pages and popping them in a ring binder.

#### THE GAME

M1TP revolves around your choice of platoon, your choice of men, and your choice of conflict scenario. Stored on disk (and updated every time you play) is a roster of platoons, each one



This is where the gunner would be sitting in real life. It's rather less comfortable than your armchair...



featuring different names and associated skill ratings. Your average tank comes equipped with a tank commander sticking his head out of the hatch, a gunner who guns, a loader who loads, and a driver who keeps the 57.1 tonnes of heavy metal thundering across the 3D terrain at speeds of up to 67kph – an unnerving experience for the uninitiated who thought that tanks, well, sort of trundled along.

The skills of your crew are of paramount importance and your long-term objective is to develop their skills in action, winning the medals and improving their performance. Your ultimate goal is, naturally, to become embroiled in a full-scale war against the Soviets and send their T80m84's and other metal monsters to the scrapheap. Microprose obviously aren't in a hurry to declare an end to East-West conflict, which seems a pity until you realise that if the game is to be realistic it has to reflect the fact that the Soviets are currently the only people with some hardware to challenge you with.

Winning the war, however, is quite impossible unless your crews are up to scratch. That's because M1TP is a clever blend of player intervention and computer control. Battles are fought over a 3D map with hills, valleys, rivers, and many other topographical features. At any time during battle you can select any one of your vehicles, wherever and whatever it may be, from a scout helicopter (yes, even total flight freaks get their fix here) checking out the opposition to an M1 Abrahams sneaking up the river, and get the relevant 3D view up on your screen.

With tanks, this selection gives you complete control over that vehicle and all the crew members. The good news, however, is that this complete control is supplemented by the computer so that you can, for example, take the commander's position, sticking your head out of the hatch and peering around with your binoculars, while at the same time telling your driver to go full speed ahead, your gunner to fire at will, and the other vehicles in your formation to take up Echelon left formation (ranged behind you, guns at 45 degrees). Suddenly, there you are careering across the landscape, guns all blazing together, smashing your way through the opposition...Flight sim freaks can eat hot lead for all I care, this beats single handed aerial combat any day.



OK, so Wild Bill Stealey looks as if he's finally flipped his lid. However, he did have the good sense to use the Freedom of Information Act to get the data he needed for the game.



Major Wild Bill takes a real tankbuster through the game.

# ATTACK!

How does it feel to roar into battle at the head of your armoured platoon? Here's a quick engagement with the Soviets to whet your appetite...



On the map display, here at full zoom, we see our four tanks ready for action. It all looks green because they're on a hill...Some of the crews are over the hill, but that's another matter...



Zoom out to see the entire map. The panel on the right shows the current vehicle's statistics. Note that the commander is, er, 'Inept'. The red spots are hostile vehicles. Let's go get 'em!

The map screen is where you do your thinking, and where you find out what's going on across the entire battle arena. Your units and the enemy's are all clearly marked and you can select any unit (hostile or friendly) by pinpointing it with the crosshairs and pressing RETURN. This not only gives you control over it, but also all pertinent information in a window to the right.



The driver peers through his windscreen and puts his foot down. The instruments aren't just for show - each one tells you something that could save your life!



A quick eyeball out of the hatch catches one of our other platoon members on the left. We're going to follow the stream to the west and then cut off north to engage the enemy (check the map).



As we approach, the gunner gets jumpy. Needle indicator at bottom centre selects appropriate ammo - we're currently using Sabot armour piercing (range around 1500 metres). The target's visible dead ahead just above the sights - all we've got to do now is close in and let rip!

## THE ACE VERDICT

We rate M1TP at 926. That ought to speak for itself. It's a welcome break from flight sims that boasts enough detail to keep even the most compulsive nitpicker happy, and at the same time has a breadth of challenge and combat scenarios that should satisfy the most ardent gamer. A winner.

GLOBAL WARMING? – RUBBISH

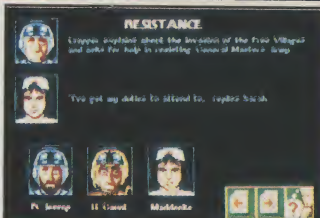
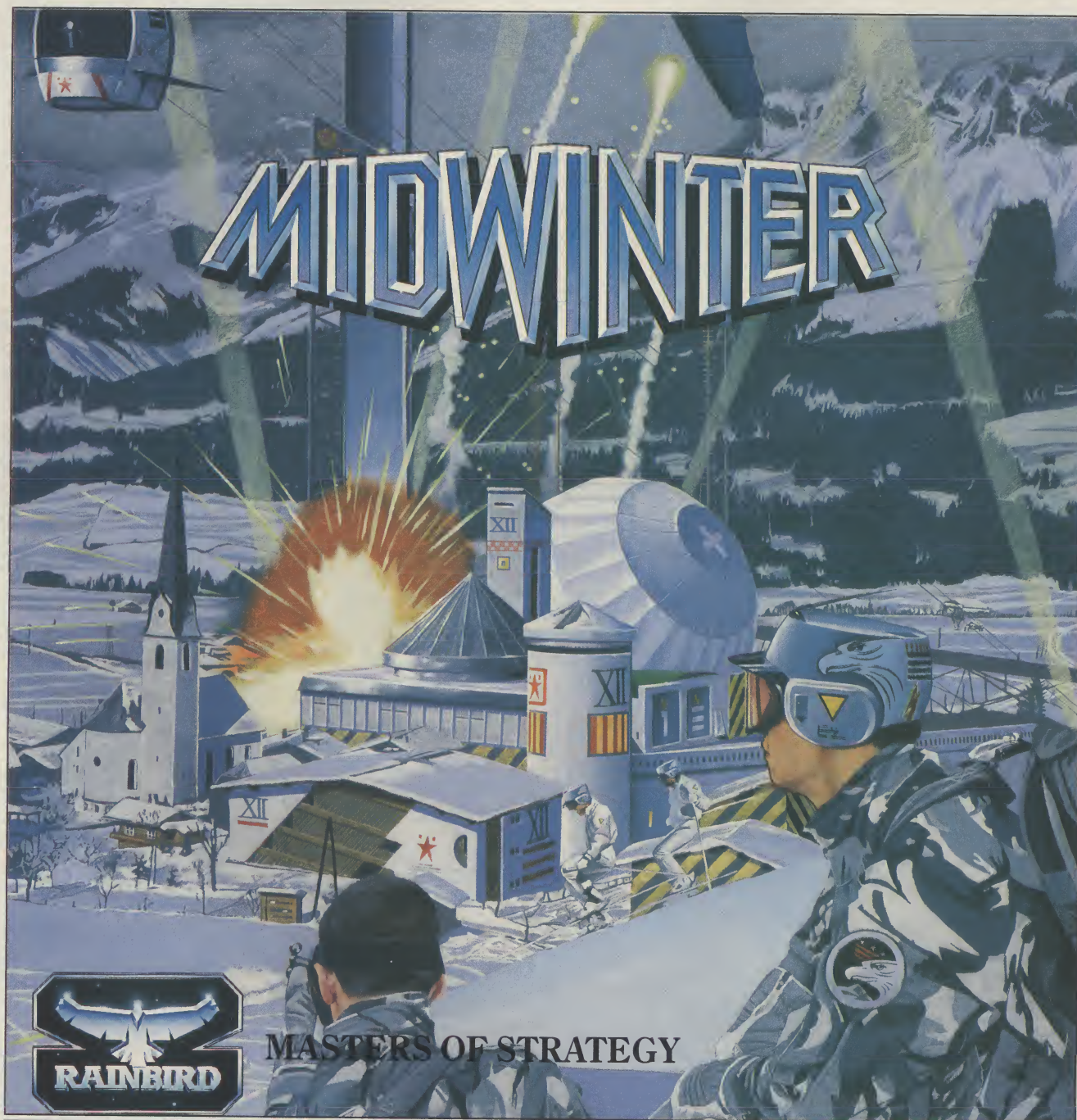
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Actual game screens from IBM PC EGA version of the game. Other versions may vary.

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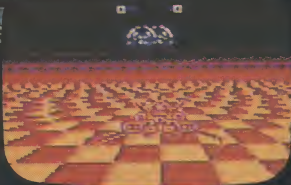
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**SEGA**

# XMAS 189

## RUNNERS & DRIVERS

Your complete guide to the main game launches of Christmas season.

As the main challengers for the lucrative number one slot in the Christmas charts line up on the starting grid- the likely winner is as difficult to predict as ever. One thing is clear though. Christmas '89's biggie is going to be a racing game.

In pole position are last year's winners Ocean with their home conversions of the Taito racer - *Chase HQ*. Sega's *Power Drift* will be challenging strongly with heavy weight PR and TV commercials through Activision.

In third position on the grid is *Hard Drivin* - the coin-op game licence from Domark. These are not the only games in the race. There are one or two brilliant original titles to be reckoned with as well - *Stunt Car* for example, or *Vette* are yet to appear on a few key formats - and *Continental Circus* and *Turbo Out Run* are no slouchers either. There are other hot licences- *Ninja Warriors* looks superb, as does *The Untouchables* - but ACE is sure the Xmas biggie will have wheels on.

We have divided the field into Favourites, Front Runners, Outsiders, and Christmas Turkeys. Don't buy anything until you have checked our guide - and why not let your best friend, lover, parents, or Great Aunt Nelly take a butchers at it as well before they do their Christmas shopping.

### THE FAVOURITES

#### Chase HQ

Ocean

Taito's *Chase HQ* placed the player at the wheel of a plain clothes police Porsche. It was straight out of *Miami Vice* - chasing the villains through the streets and along the highway, taking pot shots at them as you stood up in the car, and aimed your gun from the sun roof. Your HQ gives you your mission which is generally the macho business of rescuing some buxom bimbo who has been abducted by the bad guys. A constant running commentary is kept up by HQ as you twist and turn and



attempt to get the crooks in your gun sights. The cops and robbers scenario provided an added interest to the main business of racing along at breakneck speed in a Porsche.

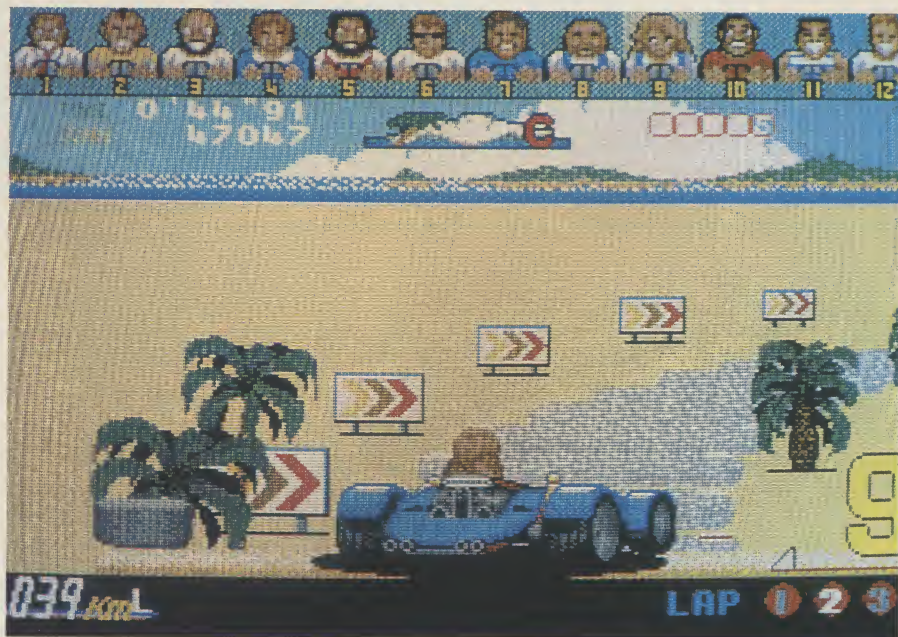
There is nothing in *Chase HQ* to make you gasp and think "they are never going to do that on a home computer". Converting it to most systems should provide no problem to Ocean's large in-house programming team - even if they

are not particularly well known for driving games. Of the work we have seen so far on the conversions they are looking extremely good - with the Spectrum performing particularly well in the graphics and speed departments. Our money is on *Chase HQ* - to take the number one slot with, as happened last year, Ocean competing largely against themselves, with at least another two of their titles likely to be in the top ten.

#### Power Drift

Activision

Once again Activision make their bid for the top slot by attempting to convert a 'state of the art' Sega game. *Power Drift* was a monster, literally, when it appeared in the arcades last Summer. One of the biggest cabinets I have ever seen. But its physical size was not matched by its performance as a money spinner. It proved a bit difficult to get into, and at a quid a go you couldn't afford that much practice.



This was a shame as the game is superb - with real depth as opposed to the simple sight seeing of something like *Out Run*.

The game places you at the wheel of a souped up hot rod with massive tires, a very low perspective on the road, and pits you against eleven other reckless speed freaks. There are five courses - with five separate circuits in each. The best spills and frills are to be had on the corners and with the ramps as the buggy takes off and skids on landing. Nice

inclines and steep up-hill climbs add to the feeling of power that rests under the bonnet of your buggy. Conversion work is progressing nicely - with, just as in the case of *Chase HQ*, the 8-bit versions looking largely well. Check our full review of the Amiga version on page 80. All versions will be reviewed in Updates as soon as we lay our hands on them.

Although the ACE money is on *Chase HQ* - there are one or two voices around here muttering that Activision may well out-hype the Manchester software house, and that the quality of conversions may have nothing at all to do with what sells in Christmas week. Shame that.

## Hard Drivin

Domark

The Dom Doms bid for the Christmas biggie rests on their conversions of Atari's *Hard Drivin*. A big hit in the arcades - with stacks of them still around - which is more than can be said for *Power Drift*.



*Hard Drivin* took a revolutionary approach to coin-op racing when it appeared in the Arcades this Spring. It is much more of a simulation than any of the others - with the car performing in a realistic manner, i.e. the steering wheel wrestles against you if you attempt to take a corner too quickly. There is lots of fun to be had though - and there is also a race on with stacks of other cars to be lapped or to collide with for the hapless driver.

The neatest feature of all is the 'loop the loop' track. You really need to put your foot down to have sufficient momentum to push your vehicle through 360 degrees. The graphics in *Hard Drivin* look more like a home computer game in the *Starglider II*, *Carrier Command*, style than they do a coin-op. This bodes well for the conversions - particularly the 16-bit conversions. As with all games of a semi-3D nature the Spectrum versions perform well - and *Hard Drivin* is no exception judging from the work in progress we have seen so far. The *Hard Drivin* course with its Speed Track, bridges, ramps, and loop the loop track provide stacks of playability. A lot more challenging than *Chase HQ* and, to a lesser extent, *Power Drift* as well.

## THE FRONT RUNNERS

### Operation Thunderbolt

Ocean

The sequel to *Operation Wolf* - and really just more of the same. Spray Uzi fire at anything that moves as you attempt to rescue the hostages and escape in the plane. Taito added an extra Uzi to the cabinet for simultaneous two player action and there are also one or two pieces of 3D-ish graphics as you travel into the screen in armoured vehicles. More levels than the first one - as you travel from road, to mansion, through an army camp, an airfield and finally to a hijacked airliner where the hostages are held. Your aim is to shoot the terrorists without injuring any of the passengers or the pilot. As the sequel to the massively successful *Operation Wolf* - *Operation Thunderbolt* has a large army of fans out there who may fancy another go at the shooting gallery.

Conversions look every bit as good as they were of *Op-Wolf* and the sequel will benefit from the fact the programmers can polish up and improve on the routines they developed for the first game. Competent conversions on all machines make *Op-Thunderbolt* a strong front runner.

## Galaxy Force

Activision

Another massive Sega cabinet from their 'think big' era. The eight legged monster looked more like a lunar landing module than a coin-op. Complete with booming speakers and hydraulic seat GF machines didn't come cheap when they were launched last Summer. For this reason you could only find them in the bigger - Seaside-style arcades.

Activision raised a few eye-brows amongst arcade fans when they announced that they had licensed the game for home conversion. The basic idea is to blast the hell out of the aliens as you hurtle through a choice of five space scapes. The graphics of the coin-op were superb. Faster than *Afterburner* and with stacks more detail in the backgrounds. You could fly under objects, as well as over them, all the time blasting away with a choice of weaponry. Each of the levels is divided into two sections - an open sky shoot out and then into the cavernous interior of the enemy base. Your ship is replenished by shield strength - which needs to be topped up by grabbing power-ups as you travel.

Activision have their work cut out attempting to convert this. As for its chart performance - its a big name licence, it will be heavily promoted by Activision, and it will sell regardless of what ACE or anyone else thinks of it.

## Cabal

Ocean

*Cabal* is 3D military shoot 'em up in the *Op-Wolf* style - but you control a commando rather than moving a cross hair around the screen. The end of each level is protected by a giant gun ship, tank, and submarine. The game did well for Capcom in the arcades and ought to equally well for Ocean as a conversion. All versions should be coded to a high standard as the original game design is fairly straight forward - and Ocean ought to be able to use existing routines.

## Toobin

Domark

This one could surprise a few people. It was never a massive arcade hit but it had a loyal following who absolutely loved it to bits. Like *Bubble Bobble*, it is ever so cute and hugely addictive.



Another wacky Atari coin-op title in which the player has to shoot the rapids - amongst other courses - in a tire inner tube, or 'Toob' as they call them in the States - hence "Toobin". One to watch.

## Ninja Warriors

Virgin

From a famously bad conversion of a beat 'em up last Christmas in the shape of *Double Dragon* - Virgin have bounced back with what is arguably the best conversion of any beat 'em up ever, yes ever, in the shape of *Ninja Warriors*. They have pulled off the near impossible by devising a system that successfully simulates the treble screen, Taito coin-op on one narrow strip of game play action on 16bit machines. Looks superb, and plays well - as you take on a variety of military, hoodlum, and animal adversaries in this horizontally scrolling conversion of this Summer '88 arcade hit. A very strong front runner indeed.

## Bat Man - The Movie

Ocean

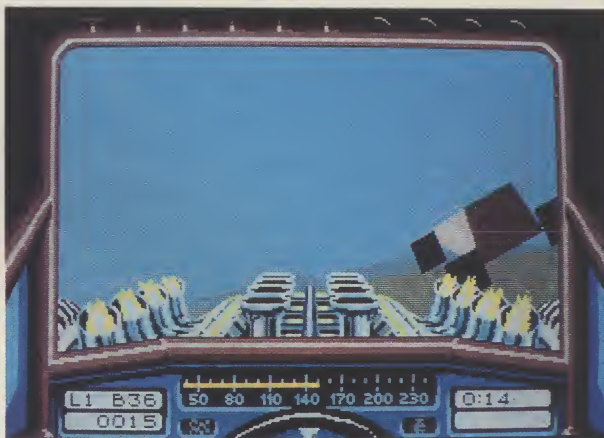
Can Bat-hype carry through until Christmas? There is no reason to think not, particularly with the granny and girl friend purchasers making up a significant number of Xmas 'gift' game buyers. The conversion sensibly concentrates on a few of the exciting scenes from the film - like the race through Gotham City in the Batmobile, the big scrap in the Joker's hide out, and the bursting of the toxic balloons that floated above the city that Batman pierced by flying through them in the Bat-jet. This makes for an amusing multi-event arcade challenge. Could even be a number one. Holy megabucks!

## Stunt Car Racer

Microprose

Geof Crammond's master piece has so far only been reviewed on the ST - where it won accolades from every single reviewer who looked at it. The excellent C64 version is Updated on page 99 and that, too, is superb. With key versions about to hit the shops (Amiga, Spectrum, and PC) that all look equally good - this innovative game could well push some of the 'big name' licensed racers off the circuit. Its combination of filled polygon graphics and race challenges like bridges and ramps make for comparisons with *Hard Drivin* - but in ACE's view it is more entertaining than this. It is more of a challenge - and that's what racing games have been crying out for. You want to do much more than just drive fast.

The best original challenge to the mega-licence, mega-hype incarnations. In

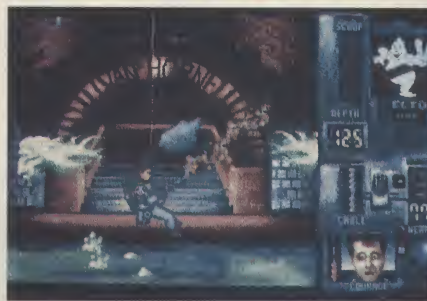


the hearts of real racing fans, this deserves the top slot - even if they know in their heads that it isn't going to get it. Still ACE's first choice racing game - whatever happens in the Christmas Computer Game Grand Prix.

## Ghost Busters II

Activision

The film hasn't exactly bombed, and it hasn't exactly done that well either. It has just been overshadowed by things like *Lethal Weapon II*,



the indomitable *Batman*, and the soon to be launched - *Star Trek V* - which also has a computer game conversion, and a red hot one t'boot. The game is apparently brilliant - though not reviewable as we go to press, and is high on Activision's list of titles to receive heavy weight hype, which should insure a chart position. Gary Williams is Marshmallow Man.

## The Untouchables

Ocean

Sean Connery made the film. He played a certain type of American cop - tough, uncompromising, and best described by Tom Wolfe in *Bonfire of the Vanities* as "Irish Cop - don't back off". This shoot 'em up don't back off either. Based on a few action packed scenes from the film (Ocean are becoming quite expert at this) the player has to complete six levels. Its combination of horizontal scrolling action and impressive graphical representation of 1920's Chicago make for an excellent - *Op-Wolfish* sort of a game. Could well repeat the massive - though unexpected success of *Robocop*.

## Turbo Outrun

U S Gold

Out Run is such a successful coin-op that you still find plenty of them around in most arcades

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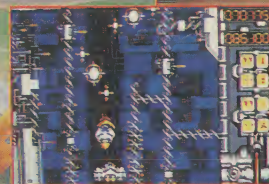
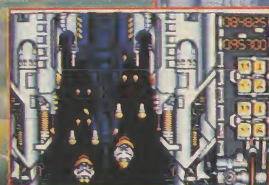
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# OUT NOW

- two and a half years after its launch. The Turbo version simply added prettier, and smoother graphics - with a turbo button which gives a short boost of super speed when pressed. USG's chief development house - Probe of South London - are crowing about the quality of the conversion. A big name game that will undoubtedly shift off the shelves this Christmas.

## Ghouls and Ghosts

U S Gold

This Capcom coin-op is ideally suited for conversion to home machines. Indeed many reviewers observed when *Ghouls and Ghosts* and its predecessor - *Ghosts and Goblins*, were launched - that they should have been home games. The Sega Megadrive version of *Ghouls and Ghosts* has already won praise in many reviews - and there is no reason why these USG conversions shouldn't be every bit as good on the Amiga and ST.

You are a knight in shining armour on a mission to rescue a princess - collecting power ups and taking out the ghouls, ghosts, and other assorted nasties who are out to stop you. USG are not amongst the favourites this year - for the first time in four years - but they do have a very strong front runner in *Ghouls and Ghosts*.

## THE OUTSIDERS

### Shadow of the Beast

Psygnosis

Very pretty scrolling shoot 'em up adventure. So far only available on the Amiga. Unlikely to take a top placing on only one format.

### Kick Off

Anco

Footy is always popular - and Anco have the best version for 16-bit machines currently available. Likely to find its way in to quite a few Christmas stockings.

### Continental Circus

Virgin

An excellent Taito grand prix coin-op in its day and well converted on most systems by Virgin. Likely to be overshadowed by more up to date racing conversions.



### Star Trek V

Mindscape

The world is full of Trekkies - and with film number V about to be released - this film tie-in should have very strong Christmas present appeal.

### Strider

US Gold

Excellent conversion of the recent Capcom arcade adventure. Has been well rated by ACE and other mags. May have peaked by Christmas.

### Myth

System 3

Excellent arcade adventure from the Last Ninja software house. Could get System 3 back into gamers good books - after the fiasco that was *Dominator*?

### Damocles

Novagen



The sequel to *Mercenary* - and looking absolutely superb. Only available on 16-bit and (PC after Christmas) *Damocles* ups the stakes in the increasingly popular solid 3D filled vector graphics - *Starglider II* type game. Rave reviews are about to break in most magazines and hard core game fans will love it.

### Vette

Spectrum Holobyte

Its chart performance will be restricted by only being available on the PC so far - which is probably fortunate for the licencees of some of the coin-op racers. Watch it race up the charts as soon as it is available on Amiga/ST. An excellent simulation of a race through California in America's answer to the Ferrari - a red Corvette.

## Interphase

Image Works

Another filled 3D vector graphics incarnation that looks stunning on 16-bits. Deservedly ACE rated in this issue - but perhaps not commercial enough to go top ten at Christmas.

## Fighter Bomber

Activision

ACE rated flight game that should convert well to all machines. F14's, F16's, Mig's, and stacks of other planes to choose from. A strong seller up to and after Christmas.

## Rick Dangerous

Firebird

Without doubt the best platform game launched this year and now available on all formats. Should maintain a strong chart position from now till Christmas.

## Ultimate Golf

Gremlin

Gremlin have put a lot into this one and it shows. Should benefit from a rare shortage of new golf games. Could go all the way to the top ten.

## Altered Beast

Activision

Popular Sega beat 'em up with huge sprites and excellent sound. Likely to be a bit of fashion victim in that beat 'em ups are not as popular as they used to be. It might chart - but it is unlikely to go top ten.

## M1 Tank

Microprose



Superb tank warfare simulation. So far only available on PC and therefore unlikely to chart this Christmas.

## Iron Lord

Ubisoft

Role playing strategy game in the Cinemaware style. Very pretty, but not main stream enough to go top ten at Christmas.

## Moonwalker

US Gold

Whose bad? Not MJ's computer game say US Gold - but then they would, wouldn't they. Strong Christmas pressie appeal should ensure a chart position for this licence game.

## Storm Lord

Hewson

Extremely pretty arcade adventure featuring fairies and dragons. Will turn heads in the shop with its graphics.

## CHRISTMAS TURKEYS

## Beach Volley

Ocean

Bronzed hunks play volley ball on the beach while their bimbettes look on. Yuk. In the middle of winter as well. Double yuk.

## Gazza's Super Soccer

Empire

Spurs Geordie joker provides the 'name' endorsement for this latest computer soccer



offering. Why don't companies concentrate on making good footy games instead of on getting soccer stars mug shots for the packaging.?

## Cribbage King

Mindscape

According to the advertisement this game features the "World's strongest Cribbage-playing algorithms". My word, how interesting. Zzzzzzzzz.

## Roadwars

16-Blitz

How can anyone in their right mind re-release this mega-Turkey - even if it is only £4.99, and even if it is the season of good will. You will be

well and truly stuffed if you get this in your Christmas stocking.

## Pictionary

Domark



The 16-bit versions cost more than the board game itself, which is clearly ridiculous when you consider that they don't have even half of its playability. What a turkey.

## Lotus 1 2 3

Lotus Development Corporation

No pretty graphics, no arcade entertainment value whatsoever, it costs several hundred pounds and doesn't run on the C64, Spectrum, Atari ST, or Amiga. Pass the Cranberry sauce.

## CHRISTMAS PAST AND CHRISTMAS PRESENT

In the next few weeks the C+VG Hits, ACE Ratings and stacks of other magazine awards are going to be flying like nobody's business. Everything can't be brilliant, can it? The answer is definitely no - but it is easy to get this impression when you flick through some of the mags in Smiths. To help you make up your own mind we have six Top Tens - the Top Ten from the last four years according to Gallup, ACE's prediction for Christmas '89 actual sales - and our merit Top Ten - the ones that would make up the Top Ten if the ACE review team got their way.

## CHRISTMAS 1985

- |    |                           |                 |
|----|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1  | Commando                  | Elite           |
| 2  | Yie Ar Kung Fu            | Ocean           |
| 3  | They Sold A Million       | Various         |
| 4  | Rambo                     | Ocean           |
| 5  | Elite                     | Firebird        |
| 6  | Way of the Exploding Fist | Melbourne House |
| 7  | Computer Hits 10          | Various         |
| 8  | Formula One Simulator     | Mastertronic    |
| 9  | Winter Games              | Epyx/US Gold    |
| 10 | Back To School            | Microshare      |

## CHRISTMAS 1986

- |   |                  |         |
|---|------------------|---------|
| 1 | Gauntlet         | US Gold |
| 2 | Computer Hits 10 | Various |

- |    |                     |          |
|----|---------------------|----------|
| 3  | Trivial Pursuit     | Domark   |
| 4  | Space Harrier       | Elite    |
| 5  | Paper Boy           | Elite    |
| 6  | Hit Pack            | Various  |
| 7  | Konami Coin-op Hits | Ocean    |
| 8  | Ollie and Lisa      | Firebird |
| 9  | Five Star Games     | Various  |
| 10 | Cobra               | Ocean    |

## CHRISTMAS 1987

- |    |                      |                  |
|----|----------------------|------------------|
| 1  | Out Run              | US Gold          |
| 2  | Match Day II         | Ocean            |
| 3  | Combat School        | Ocean            |
| 4  | Magnificent 7        | Ocean            |
| 5  | Live Ammo            | Ocean            |
| 6  | Grand Prix Simulator | Code Masters     |
| 7  | Solid Gold           | US Gold          |
| 8  | Star Wars            | Domark           |
| 9  | 10 Pack              | Gremlin Graphics |
| 10 | Game Set And Match   | Ocean            |

## CHRISTMAS 1988

- |   |                |                 |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Operation Wolf | Ocean           |
| 2 | Robocop        | Ocean           |
| 3 | Double Dragon  | Melbourne House |
| 4 | After Burner   | Activision      |
| 5 | Thunder Blade  | US Gold         |
| 6 | Giants         | US Gold         |

- |    |              |                 |
|----|--------------|-----------------|
| 7  | Falcon       | Mirrorsoft      |
| 8  | Joe Blade II | Players         |
| 9  | R-Type       | Electric Dreams |
| 10 | Ghostbusters | Mastertronic    |

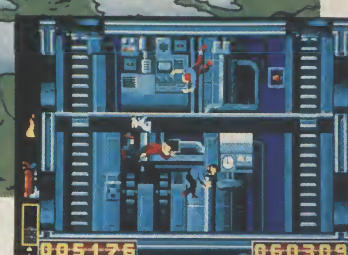
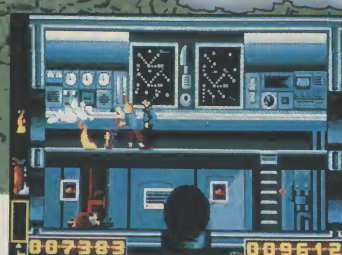
## ACE CHRISTMAS PREDICTION 1989

- |    |                       |            |
|----|-----------------------|------------|
| 1  | Chase HQ              | Ocean      |
| 2  | Power Drift           | Activision |
| 3  | Batman - The Movie    | Ocean      |
| 4  | Hard Drivin           | Domark     |
| 5  | Operation Thunderbolt | Ocean      |
| 6  | Ghouls and Ghosts     | US Gold    |
| 7  | Ninja Warriors        | Virgin     |
| 8  | The Untouchables      | Ocean      |
| 9  | Winners               | US Gold    |
| 10 | Toobin                | Domark     |

## ACE REVIEW TEAM - MERIT TOP TEN

- |    |                    |             |
|----|--------------------|-------------|
| 1  | Stunt Car          | Microstyle  |
| 2  | Damocles           | Novagen     |
| 3  | Interphase         | Image Works |
| 4  | Fighter Bomber     | Activision  |
| 5  | M1 Tank            | Microprose  |
| 6  | Vette              | Spectrum    |
| 7  | Hard Drivin        | Holobyte    |
| 8  | Kick Off           | Domark      |
| 9  | Rick Dangerous     | Anco        |
| 10 | Batman - The Movie | Firebird    |

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# THE OUTER LIMITS

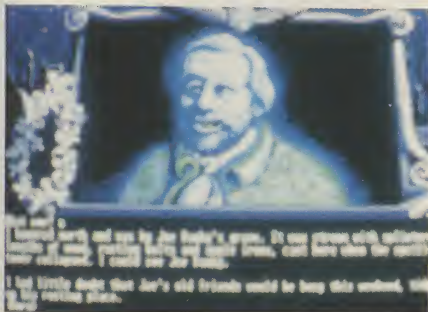
PAT WINSTANLEY PRESENTS HER FIRST FANTASY/ADVENTURE COLUMN

## SCAPEGHOST

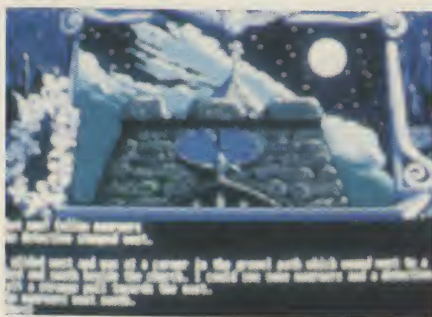
The last LEVEL 9 adventure...Good riddance, or sad farewell?

**T**his is the last text/graphics adventure planned by Level 9 before they set to work with RPGs and their HUGE system (see page 19 of this issue) and as a swan song its not at all bad. How many times have you played the part of a ghost, barely able to lift a piece of thistledown, never mind tackle a hardened criminal? To succeed in *Scapeghost* you must forget about brute force and rely instead on your wits.

Infiltrating a drugs gang has its hazards as you, policeman Alan Chance, have discovered. Someone or something alerted the gang and as a result they rubbed you out, escaping with your colleague Sarah as a hostage. Unfortunately, this heroic self-sacrifice doesn't seem to have gone down well with the Force, on the contrary, they seem to believe that you were in with the gang and have branded you a traitor –



Level 9 put their character handler to work for the last time...with spooks.



Marvel at the graphics, despair at the sight of the last Level 9 adventure...

this you discover when you materialise, as a ghost, watching your own funeral. You now have only three nights to clear your name and gain revenge.

After the mourners have left your first task is to build up your strength while persuading your neighbours in this des-res to help you in your task. However the other ghosts are rather a surly lot – well, wouldn't you be if you'd spent the last few years in a damp, dark cemetery? – so you'll need to discover what makes them tick and cheer up their gloomy lives before they'll be of much use. This 'do-goody' scenario seems to be a typical Level 9 hallmark nowadays, after Ingrid's attempts at 'cheering people up' in previous games.

Without giving away too much of the plot, the game is split into three sections, one for

each night. The first night is spent developing your ghostly powers and working out a way to foil the gang's criminal plans. On the second night you must attempt to alert the police as to the present whereabouts of the criminals, while the third night is spent rescuing Sarah and preventing the gang from destroying the evidence.

Presentation is up to the normal Level 9 standards with atmospherically detailed graphics (which can be moved up and down the screen or switched off altogether if you prefer) complementing good descriptive text descriptions and a fairly comprehensive parser.

Responses are nicely creepy at times and occasionally the game presents you with excruciating puns on the ghostly theme. I found that these little asides did much to dispell the scarier implications of the plot without detracting from the atmosphere too much. It is, however, open to question just how horrific a game can be anyway – see the horror article this month on page 35. If the man who plays Freddy Krueger thinks games can't cut the mustard in a suitably gory fashion then who am I to disagree? On the other hand, I can't help feeling that he never played *Lurking Horror*...

If you're used to object oriented adventures you'll find *Scapeghost* quite a challenge. Lateral thinking is definitely required to complete the game and the satisfaction of working out the answer to some of the puzzles is equivalent to that gained from the solving of entire games with more conventional plots.

What a shame there won't be any more text adventures from the software house which has given so much pleasure over the years. *Scapeghost* definitely marks the end of an era; let's hope the HUGE games are an adequate replacement.

Definitely a sad farewell this, and no good riddance. Perhaps nostalgia will one day persuade Level 9 to give us another adventure.

## KAYDEN GARTH

Geman fantasy from EAS GOLD SELECTION.

**F**unny how whenever a style of game becomes popular we see folks with little appreciation of the niceties of the genre jumping on the bandwagon. *Kayden Garth* is a case in point.

According to the press release this is a highly complex dragons and dungeons game with numerous traps and opponents to make your task difficult. Quite why it was felt necessary to add opponents and traps to the game is beyond me as the operating system itself contains enough traps and misleading information to satisfy the most hardened masochist – and that's before you even start to play.

*Kayden Garth* is a detention planet in the year 2465 where the prisoners have rebelled. You are the commander of a reconnaissance

unit sent to the planet to shed light on occurrences there and put down the rebellion.

The game is a fairly standard RPG with an overhead view of outdoor locations and 3D for dungeons. The four characters for your party can be chosen from eight races/professions. Statistics can be re-rolled to your taste before saving your party to disk – the original game disk! In fact a spare disk can be used for saves, but nothing in the documentation signifies this. The only thing that stopped me wiping out the pre-supplied party was my habit of write-protecting all original discs.

This is not the only instance where error trapping is either inadequate or non-existent. The manual supplied gives a list of keys for the C64 and a short warning not to press the

### LANDSCAPE .....70

Not a tremendous number of locations, but what there are are well described.

### ENCOUNTERS .....85

Great fun conversing with your fellow ghosts – and mortals.

### CHALLENGE .....85

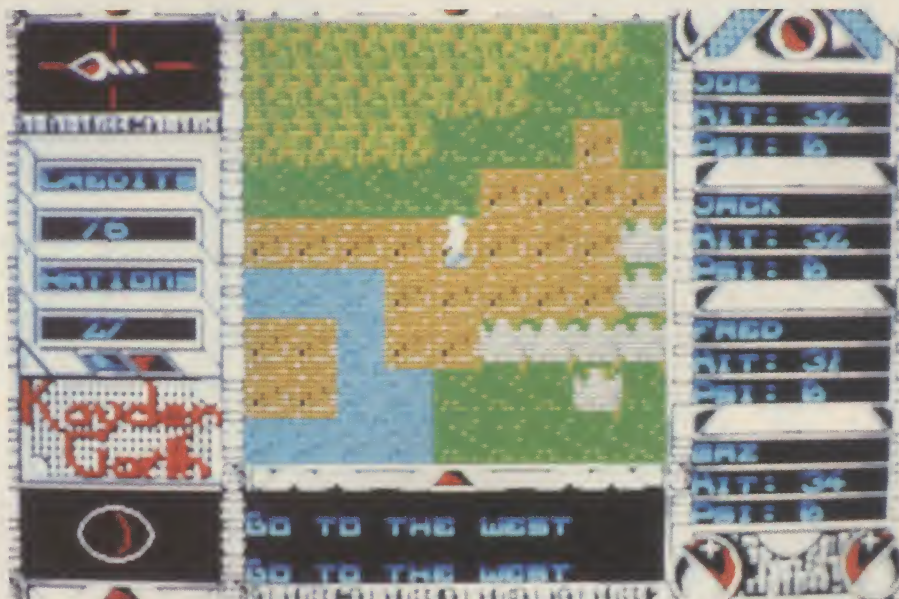
Get your thinking cap on for this one – it's not easy.

### SYSTEM .....85

All the features you'd expect such as a comprehensive parser, ramsave/load, oops etc.

**ACE RATING**  
**885**

Don't let the scenario put you off. *Scapeghost* is spine wriggling rather than spine chilling. A great challenge and lots of kick-yourself puzzle solutions.



**Kayden Garth on the ST. How is it that RPG games like this so often fail to impress? There have been dozens of releases, but only a handful are worth playing. Stick to Ultima, that's my advice...**

wrong key as this could load an old score and wipe out progress to date. Fine, but the ST uses some rather different keystrokes (discovered by expensive trial and error) and again the load/save routines are not error trapped. It should not be necessary to have to constantly use the physical write-protect instead of an "Are you sure?" type screen prompt.

Control of the game is probably the worst I have ever seen. Moving around on the overhead view landscape involves the square bracket keys for east/west, the minus key for south and believe it or not SHIFT/@ for north – great fun while attempting to run away from an approaching enemy. As usual the sprite representing your party is centered on the map but movement leaves much to be desired. Motion is very slow and jerky with no key repeat making journeys from A to B tedious and frustrating.

#### UNDERGROUND

Exploring underground has its little teasers too. Dungeons are shown in 3D perspective which gives absolutely no sense of movement if you happen to be in a long corridor with no visible exits – not even a flicker. You'll need to cast a spell to appreciate this though as the dungeons are unlit so the party requires a light source. Easier said than done, unfortunately. After equipping my party in the local town with several torches each I entered the dungeon,

#### LANDSCAPE .....50

Pretty average presentation but close-ups of battles are nicely drawn with simple but effective animation.

#### ENCOUNTERS.....40

No control over which of your party is fighting in a particular round of battle.

#### CHALLENGE.....35

Plenty of exploration and combat – if you can be bothered to cope with the system.

#### SYSTEM .....10

It only crashed on me twice!

### ACE RATING 350

Perhaps the plot could have made a decent shoot-em-up but as an RPG it's a disaster.

pressed L as instructed to use my lamp and...darkness, plus a message "You have no torch". Oh yes I have, I insisted, I've just paid hard credits for them. Only trouble is, there appears to be no command for inventory so I was unable to prove my point.

Combat brings up a display of your character and the opposing foe. There seems to be no way of adjusting marching order so weaker members are effectively in the front line. Nor is

# NO PROBLEM!

We'll be showering you with hints and tips every month from now on. But why don't you stake a claim to fame by sending in some of your own? We'll print help on any fantasy, RPG, or adventure game on the market. Send them on a postcard to ACE No Problem, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. Get to it!

#### BLOODWYCH

To obtain plentiful supplies of money and keys, select your champions but don't recruit them yet. First go through the hall recruiting each champion you don't want, relieve them of their supplies, remove them from the party (minus weapons) then kill them. Only when all the champions you don't want are dead should you recruit the others for your quest.

Use a Vitalise spell instead of food. Renew helps restore strength. The red spell Fireball is extremely useful in the early stages. Try the yellow Terror spell to stop monsters advancing on you.

When mapping, metal doors are set halfway along wall sections while wooden ones are at the ends.

Watch out for spinners in the maze! Use compass and dropped objects to navigate.

Locked doors give a clue as to the key required. Look at the colour of the top of the door locks.

Save before entering the Serpent tower – preferably on a spare disk! Once in you can't get out again unless you do the right thing which involves going up one side of

there any way of controlling which member of the party is attacking (and taking the foe's return of fire). Messages appear during the battle to say who has attacked who and what resulted eg. "Faranter shots (sic) at the alien but misses" or "Spell casted (sic)". Apparently the monsters don't just do the fighting, they wrote the screen messages as well.

Anyone who's played most of the overhead view RPG-influenced games (E.G. *Legend of*

# FANTASY FUTURES

US Gold are set to release several new adventures ranging from AD&D licences to an icon driven comedy thriller.

First on the list is *Maniac Mansion*, billed as the comedy thriller that dares to be different. Different?? Isn't this the *Maniac Mansion* we reviewed here in ACE many, many moons ago? Ah, well, er, yes...but due to the popularity of Sierra games and their look-alike competitors, USG have decided to put more mus-

cle behind this Lucasfilm title. Actually, it does deserve attention, with over 50 rooms, all sorts of zany adversaries and five different stories with different ways to win. The control method is via text menu and you can control different animated characters against some very attractive backgrounds. Lots of fun if you're into American teen culture, it will be available for C64 D, Atari ST, Amiga and IBM/PC.

**Maniac Mansion**

*Pool of Radiance* is finally being released for the ST, Amiga and Mac 'before Christmas', thoughtfully preceded by the follow up game *Hillsfar* which should be out as you read this.



the tower, down again to the bottom, then back up the other side and out.

### COLOUR OF MAGIC

You must eat the meat in part one to be able to kill the troll in part two.

### DEJA VU II

You can get money by cheating in the casino (recognise the dealer?)

### BLIZZARD PASS

To get through the window – get the snow. It will turn to slush in your hands. Put the slush in the cracks around the window – it will freeze and crack the rock and the window will fall away.

### DUNGEON MASTER

Try to lure monsters to a doorway and close the door on top of them.

Examine walls for secret buttons – some are minute!

Practise casting spells and fighting. Even if you cast spells at thin air, throw objects ahead of you or fight walls or anything it counts as practise and helps to gain a level. Don't worry if a spell fails – it's still practise. Don't practise casting fireballs against walls!

### WOLFMAN

To lift the flagstone at the top of the tower you need to turn into a wolfsman by howling at the moon.

### FRANKENSTEIN

To stop the boat from sinking 'plug leak with hemp'.

### DRACULA

If you're attacked by birds, close the window.

If you're attacked by a dog, look around and give it the bone.

*Blacksilver*, *Questron II* etc) knows that most of them offer primitive gameplay but, in recompense, dish up adequate atmosphere and lasting interest. *Kayden*, unfortunately, doesn't. Only recommended for confirmed masochists.

Meanwhile, EAS have another title coming out. You can find out more about it in the *Future Fantasy* box at the bottom of this page.



Kayden Garth again – It's a pity the game isn't as good as the graphics.

# SWORDS OF TWILIGHT

FREE FALL fantasy/RPG

On loading this new RPG from Free Fall my initial impression was of its resemblance to the *Ultima* series, with overhead views of the playing area and opportunities to converse with other characters. Further play maintained that impression. The other main resemblance is to Gauntlet style games where several characters move independently around the playing area.

The game concerns your quest to recover the *Swords of Shambala* and that's about the full extent of the plot as far as I can see. Instead of describing a complex scenario, the manual concentrates instead on promoting the multi-player aspect of the game. In fact this is the main thing that sets *Swords of Twilight* apart from run of the mill RPGs. Whereas normally you control each member of your party,

this game offers the opportunity for up to three players to each control their own character, either co-operating or backstabbing each other. For solo play the computer controls the two spare characters and you can do little to direct their behaviour.

Around two thirds of the screen is taken up by four large boxes. Three of these each contain a head and shoulders view of a character together with a note of name and mood. The rest of the box is blank for the most part and is used for messages during the game such as "You tire" or menus which allow action selections during play. The fourth box is blank most of the time and used only during encounters when the NPC's name and mood are shown in a similar manner to the player characters.

All this character display leaves only the

### MORE DRAGONS

While the bookshops keep thrusting fat paperbacks under our noses by Weis and Hickman about dragons, twins, legends and so on, USG are soldiering on with the AD&D license and giving us, in the run up to Christmas, the next AD&D product *Dragons of Flame*.

Available on most formats *Dragons of Flame* is billed as an action game rather than role playing and the plot predictably continues the fight to save Krynn from the domination of Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness. Play involves the use of the Disks of Mishakal (recovered in the earlier games) to aid the companions on their quest to free the slaves of Pax Tharkis.

The AD&D contract has three years to run and SSI has a policy of producing five such games a year. Under development is *War of the Lance* which is the first AD&D computer wargame and will offer fully detailed tactical or quick combat options and allow you to engage in diplomacy, send parties of heroes on quests to discover magical items and ultimately conquer the enemy.

One noteworthy point about these games – several were produced by none other than Mike Woodroffe, who older readers may recall was one of the driving forces behind adventure software in the UK in the early '80s, starting such companies as Adventure International

al (who gave us the Scott Adams games) and Adventuresoft of *Gremlins* fame.

### BUILD YOUR OWN COWBOY

This is certainly a step beyond Meccano. If you fancy being the star of your own wild west adventure watch out for *Far West*, also from E.A.S. (of *Kayden Garth* infamy) which combines elements of a role-playing game, a simulation and an arcade game. The aim is to survive and make money by creating your own cowboy, buying guns, food, beer etc, entering the wilderness by train or horse, and hunting bears or building yourself a gold mine. Amiga only (£19.99) due out now.



**Swords of Twilight** – shades of RPG, but the scenario is about as original as your average shoot-em-up.

central third of the screen to show the playing area. The view while moving around the land and indoor locations is a standard overhead style. Each character marches around independently with simple animation to maintain the sense of movement. A nice touch here is that injured members of the party often lag behind the others with the animation speed slowing down to give the impression of a bad limp – very atmospheric.

The game is set on a variety of different worlds – each having the same visual layout but with different inhabitants and magical qualities. Access between worlds is via gates leading to the Rainbow Road. Most of the gates are guarded by dragons who enjoy a natter with the party before allowing it to pass. Once on the Rainbow road you can choose to drop off at any of the other worlds – each identified by a colour coded gate.

Combat is carried out by placing your character adjacent to the enemy and facing it, then holding down the trigger (key or joystick button). The system is described as arcade style but this shouldn't put off those with slower

reflexes as co-ordination is more important than speed.

There's a comprehensive magic system. Conjurers, witches, wizards, enchanters and sorcerers may be included in your party, each with their own batch of spells. Casting spells drains the character's energy, the degree determined by the complexity of the spell. The keyboard is used to prepare and cast spells and requires entry of either the mantra or elemental involved together with the name of the spell.

#### ALL TOGETHER NOW

What sets this game apart from many of the others around is the multi-player system. For three players to take part, two joysticks are needed. The other player uses the keyboard. The mouse cannot be used at all. Each player controls his character independently, but the party cannot split up too much and must always be within sight of each other on the playing area. A character attempting to move too far away from the others is simply blocked from moving until the the others catch up.



**Swords of Twilight** – the combat system is the best thing about it, but even that is likely to pall in time...

During the multi player game each character has a variety of menu options which include talking, getting and dropping objects and shifting moods. Mood shifting is an important part of the game strategy. Characters can be hostile, wary, polite or friendly at will, each mood affecting the results of interaction with NPCs. Thus hostility towards a potentially friendly character will reduce the chances of eliciting useful information, while being friendly to a hostile ogre is likely to have fatal effects. In the solo game the computer controlled characters tend to follow the lead of the player's character as to mood – but not always!

Movement of computer controlled characters in the solo game can be fraught with difficulties, especially if the player character is a magic user 'leading' fighters from the back. Left to themselves the other members of your party are likely to bang their heads against a wall adjacent to the door you have just passed through, or take off on their own account to attack the monster you had just decided to run away from. Careful leadership is a must and adds considerably to the enjoyment of the game.

After several hours of sustained play, becoming impatient with the general lack of originality in presentation and plot, my interest in continuing was saved by a gradual appreciation of the tactical nature of encounters. This is a game that grows on you gradually. When the time came to break off play to write this review I was definitely reluctant. Hopefully I'll have the chance to tackle *Swords of Twilight* in greater depth in the future.

#### LANDSCAPE .....45

Generally unimpressive and run of the mill, but saved from oblivion by character animation while injured.

#### ENCOUNTERS.....75

Combat is simple and effective but conversation, while essential, requires patience and thought.

#### CHALLENGE.....85

Definitely a thinker's game. The strategic possibilities compensate for lack of action.

#### SYSTEM .....60

Pity about the mouse – not everyone can muster a second joystick – especially adventurers.

### ACE RATING 750

Takes some patience to get started but there's to be a good game in there with persistence.

#### MINI TIP

##### PERSONAL NIGHTMARE

Getting started – wait around in the bar of the Dog and Duck. After a while Mr Roberts, the registrar will arrive. He takes off his jacket and hangs it up. Keep waiting and you'll see Susan Blandford arrive, then after a while Jimmy Blandford leaves. Shortly, a screech of brakes is heard from outside. Now timing is important. As soon as Mr Roberts leaves the pub look in his jacket and get the key. Immediately leave the pub and you'll see Jimmy Blandford lying in the road. Examine his body before Susan arrives – you'll find a roll of film, the key to Ivy Cottage and a broken num-

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# ADVENTURE ORGANISATIONS

Stuck? Need help? Need friends? Here's the latest on the adventure get-together scene...

## DIAL-A-TIP

Having operated both write-in and phone-in helplines for several years and therefore understanding the effort involved, I was intrigued to hear of a new adventure helpline set up by Jackie Wright under the name Guiding Light. What makes this line different is the use of one of those famous 0898 numbers which the national press features regularly on behalf of recipients of large bills.

Guiding Light's policy, however, is not that of maximum gain but of fair reward for the time and effort involved in manning the line. To this end they positively discourage youngsters in particular from staying on the line any longer than is absolutely necessary.

With access to a wealth of hints and tips (some of which grace this month's column – thank you) together with knowledgeable adventurers on-line, Guiding Light are able to help with most games on all formats. The lines are open 7 days a week (noon to 8.00pm) and calls are charged at 25p per minute cheap rate and 38p per minute at all other times. The number to call is 0898 338 933.

## INTERACTION

New to the scene of adventure clubs is Inter-Action. For £15 you receive 6 bi-monthly dossiers of at least 50 pages featuring reviews of the latest adventures, RPGs and strategy games, previews, gossip, hints, maps, letters,

articles etc. Also included in the price is access to a telephone helpline open ten hours a week. More details from Inter-Action, The Cottage, Ashford Carbonell, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 4DB.

## SSA

Budding and established software authors, artists, designers and musicians may be interested in The Society of Software Authors. SSA is a collection of people with similar interests sharing knowledge and protecting their interests as a group. The aim is to ensure that the relationship between publishers and authors is fair and professional and that the authors' interests are protected in the long term. Membership offers practical advice and representation on industry issues such as copyright, contracts and pay. Full members (already published authors) pay £150 while associate members (still trying) may join for £50. More details from The Society of Software Authors, 6 Callow Croft, Burbage, Wiltshire, SN8 3TB.

## HALA

Remember Sonia Griffiths who has been running HALA (The Hints Archive for Lost Adventurers) for over four years now? HALA is a totally free helpline operating a barter system. Help is provided on any adventure in exchange for an SAE and some tips of your own. Over the last year Sonia has had to wind down the activities

of the club due to other commitments but is now set to help the world again. A new feature is a free telephone helpline 10.00am to 11.00pm Mon-Sat which can be reached on 0482-654036. The address is 38 Bellfield Drive, Willerby, East Yorks, HU10 6HQ. A last word from Sonia... "I'm still the only free club in England and proud of it."

## SYNTAX

ST owners who fancy a stock of reviews, solutions and hints on disc could do worse than SynTax disc magazine. Published by Sue Medley and John Barnsley, each disc is crammed with adventure information. Issues are bi-monthly and details of price etc can be obtained by sending an SAE to Sue Medley, 9 Warwick Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6LJ.

A similar publication but this time on paper and catering for all computer formats is Spellbreaker. This is a monthly magazine which also includes maps and costs £1.25. For further details contact Mike Brailsford, 19 Napier Place, South Parks, Glenrothes, Fife, KY6 1DX

## PROBE

For general adventure chat, tips, solutions and other related topics the long established Adventure Probe gives an excellent monthly read covering all machines. Sample copies are available for £1.25 from Adventure Probe, 24 Maes Y Cwm, Llandudno, Gwynedd, LL30 1JE

## SCAPEGHOSH COMPO!

It's the end of an era. Level 9, the adventure company started by the Austin family, have been responsible for inspiring and maintaining the British adventure market since their first game, *Colossal Adventure* hit the shelves over six years ago. For several years after that, they retained an undisputed number one slot with a succession of highly imaginative and technically superior text adventures.

*Scapeghost* is their last true adventure title. In common with their later releases it includes fabulous graphics (hand digitised, as opposed to the early style of line-drawn L9 pics) and of course the parsing and character handling systems the company are famous for.

However, what has always made Level 9 games successful has been the eccentric originality of their game designs and the technical excellence of their products. Now they're developing a new range using their more advanced graphics programming system – so maybe this isn't the end of an era, but the beginning of a



(This version allows you to use **WIN SAVE** and **WIN RESTORE** to save a position in memory, and **WIN** to take back bad moves).

**Scapeghost – five copies waiting for five clever readers...**

new one.

Whichever way you look at it, we're determined to celebrate, and Level 9 have got five copies of *Scapeghost* to give away. All you have to do is send us, on a postcard, the correct answers to the following two questions:

1. What was the first Level 9 game to feature graphics?

2. Which Level 9 adventure was modelled on the original mainframe adventure game programmed by Crowther and Woods?

The prizes go to the first five correct answers drawn out of the hat on 7th December 1989 – so get your entries in pronto on a postcard to ACE Level 9, Priory Court, 30-32 Farlington Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

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The MEGA ST computers are styled as as lightweight keyboard with a separate CPU, connected by a coiled telephone style cable. There are two versions of the MEGA ST, one with 2Mbytes of RAM and the other with 4Mbytes. Each version has a 1Mbyte double sided disk drive built-in to the CPU unit. The MEGA ST's do not come with modulator built-in and must therefore be used with a monitor. With every MEGA ST purchased, we will add the 'Professional Pack' software (worth £384.83) detailed above, plus the Silica ST Starter Kit (worth over £200) both Free Of Charge. Return the coupon for further details.

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Desktop Publishing (DTP) is one of the fastest growing applications for personal computers. We are pleased to announce a powerful low cost package for the Atari ST called PageStream. PageStream costs only £149 (+VAT=£171.35) and, because it works with an Atari 1040ST and a Seikosha SP-180AI printer, you can be up and running with a complete system for less than £1000. Some of the features of PageStream are listed to the right. If you would like further information on this program, complete and return the coupon below, ticking the 'DTP' box in the corner.

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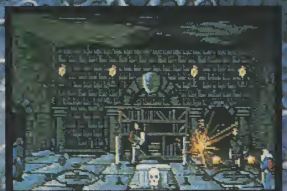
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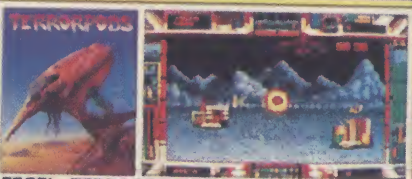
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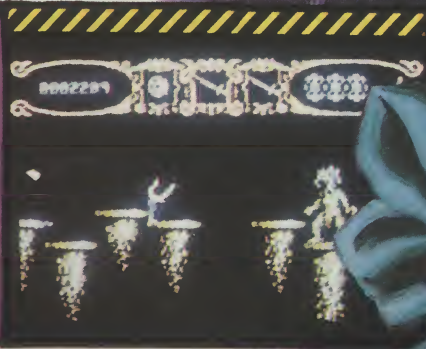
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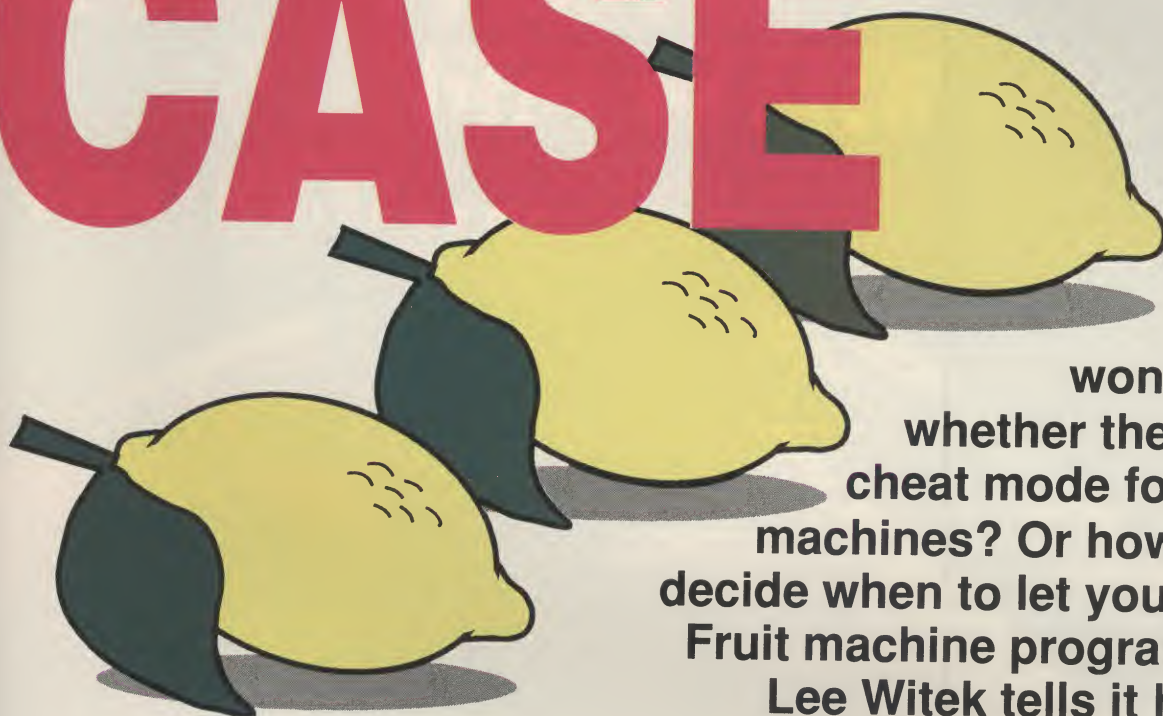
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# FRUIT CASE



Ever wondered whether there's a cheat mode for fruit machines? Or how they decide when to let you win? Fruit machine programmer Lee Witek tells it how it is...and it's tough....

**A LONG TIME** ago, before computers controlled practically everything you can mention, from washing machines to nuclear reactors, fruit machines were simple electro-mechanical affairs where you stuck your tuppence in the slot, pulled out the handle, the reels spun, and more often than not you lost. When the handle was pulled springs would spin the reels, which had a series of encoding holed around them. At the moment the reels stopped, a light would be shone through these holes and if it made it through all the reels onto an array of photocells then the coin mechanism was activated and you won lots of lovely cash. Winning amounts were decided depending on which photo-cells are activated by the light falling through the encoding holes.

Fruit machines in those days were (and still mostly are) only superficially a game of chance. In fact, the machine controls absolutely everything and the player's role is limited to pressing buttons and clinging to a naive belief that 'chance' may favour him. One thing you can be sure of, of course, is that the machine will make a profit, since this is what it's there for.

Things haven't changed much, except for

the fact that nowadays fruit machines are awesomely complex beasts. Modern AWP's (Amusement With Prizes – have you been reading your ACE Arcades Jargon column?) boast a vast array of gimmicks, whistles, and bells to attract the punter into parting with his hard-earned cash.

## INSIDE THE FRUIT CASE

In order to manage the workings of a game, there is a computer (they get everywhere) sitting at the heart of the machine. This controls everything from the spinning of the reels to paying out the money if and when you win.

Two of the biggest fruit machine manufacturers, Bell and Barcrest, both use a similar setup to control their machines. This consists of a small micro-processor system with a 6809 as its CPU. If you ever owned a Dragon 32 micro, you'll be familiar with this little beast. It's a fairly fast 8-bit processor and a predecessor of the current 68000 series used in the ST and the Amiga.

The processor board has a small amount of RAM (8-16K), masses of I/O ports to communicate with all the bells and whistles, and a cartridge port. It's the latter that really provides the oomph behind the machine, because the



## RING THAT BELL

On the sound front, most fruit machines don't fair too well. The majority of machines are equipped with a bog standard AY-3-8910 sound chip. This, believe it or not, is the same chip as is used in the Amstrad CPC, ST, and most Spectrums. It is, in this programmer's humble opinion, crap – no matter how many times an ST owner tells you it's better than an Amiga, etc. etc....

However, things are, depending on your point of view, looking up for fruit machine sonics. Some manufacturers are experimenting with various synthesis chips and sample players, so you can expect the decibel level to rise in the arcades quite dramatically in the near future. At the moment, when you walk past an arcade and hear a stereo sound track, it's coming from a video machine – but not for much longer...

Since adaptability is the name of the game here, it's possible that the manufacturers may develop a sample manipulation program similar to that developed by Rainbow Arts (see the Cocks of Gold feature in this issue on page 109). This would enable new sets of sound samples to be loaded in on cartridge.

control program is stored on EPROM (erasable read-only memory chip) which is built into a 'program module'. This module forms a small cartridge that fits into the slot on the processor board. The modules are, in fact, very similar to those used on the old Atari VCS games consoles.

This system allows easy reprogramming of the machine by simply issuing new cartridges. These cartridges are very complex and often hold 64K of code or even, for the more complex casino fruit machines, 128K. When you consider that an average 8-bit arcade game will rarely have more than 16K of code (excluding the graphics data) you can see that these control programs are no chickens.

Two other components inside the casing are the coin mechanism and the reels. The coin mechanism will accept your coins, sort them into separate hoppers, and pay out your winnings. It identifies the value of the coin you feed it by letting it drop through a magnetic field. Each size of coin will distort the field in a specific way, and this distortion is measured by the coin mechanism so that the value can be accurately recorded. Bad news for the punters: this system of detecting coins is fairly tamper-proof and stops people putting washers and other bits of metal in to get free credits on the machine.

### ALL UNDER CONTROL

A lot of people still seem to think that, because the reels are mechanical, they actually spin due to momentum rather than in a precise way. This is sadly not the case. In fact, the hideous truth is that the machine actually knows the exact finishing position of the reels BEFORE they've even started spinning!

Fruit machine programmers, however, are

clever lads. How many times have you seen the reels spin to a halt just one position short of a winning row? Often, no doubt, and each time you see it you think you'll have just one more go! This is, of course, done on purpose to add to the 'excitement' of losing money.

The secret is that the reels are attached to stepper motors which are under the precise control of the on-board computer. serves you right for being so greedy...

### WHERE DO THEY COME FROM

Trying to think of new ideas that will attract people to playing new fruit machines is not an easy job, but someone has to do it! Recently one fruit machine manufacturer set up a competition for all its employees (from the tea ladies to the production line) to come up with new features for adding to machines – proof of the fact that new approaches often elude even the design teams.

However, once the basic format of the game has been decided upon, all the required payout percentages for each feature are worked out using a spreadsheet. All this info is then passed on to the programmer who sets about coding the game.

The program is written in a variety of high and low-level languages. Barcrest for example use assembly language for the speed critical parts of the code and Forth for the rest of the program. The advantage of Forth is that it is very flexible and allows you to define all the necessary routines for flashing the lights and so on. Jupiter Ace owners would have a ball on a one-armed bandit!

All this programming is pretty heavy-duty work – the code is edited/assembled/compiled/linked on a DEC VAX mainframe. All the programmers are users on the same machine to allow easy transfer of files and access to library functions. The code is then transferred down to the microprocessor board, in a mock up of the fruit machine, via an RS232 link.

Once the machine is finished, it's sent for 'beta testing' by people with nothing better to do and then on to various test sites around the country to see if the punters like the new design. If it takes loadsamoney then the machine goes into full production and gets sent all over the country.



## CAN I WIN?

No.

Most fruit machines pay out around 70-80% of the money which is fed into them. This pay-out percentage has been carefully calculated through experiments on apes and people to give the maximum addition to the machine. The chances of winning each feature on the machine are carefully worked out by the designers so that no matter how skillful the player is, the payout over a large number of games will stay around the target 70-80%.

When the player presses the start button, the computer chooses, AT RANDOM, the new positions of the reels. If this position is a win, the chances are that the computer will promptly forget it and generate a new position with either no win or a lower value win. This is done to stop the machine from paying out too much, naturellement. Only when the computer is finally happy with the spin position it will move the reels.

The bad news is that the other supposedly 'random' and 'skill' features are worked out in the same way and modified to stay within the target 70-80%..

## WHAT ABOUT POKES?

OK, so here's the nitty gritty. Fruit machines have a small amount of RAM and some buttons. How about cheat modes, then?

Well, there's good news and bad news. The good news is that there ARE cheat modes on fruit machines. The bad news is that you can't operate them from the front panel alone. They are designed for testers and work in conjunction with the internal board. Pressing certain buttons in combination will then force a feature to a win or a lose. Like games, most machines have cheat modes but they are not..ho ho...given over to the public.



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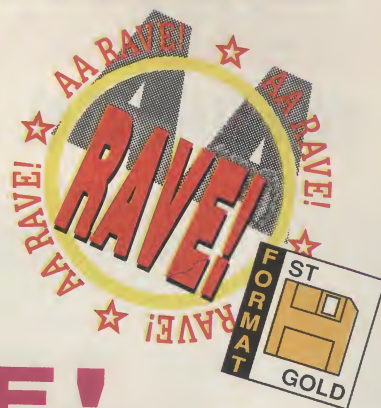
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# IN THE PINK

## THE ACE STOCKMARKET .....163

Which games are going to be next month's hot titles? And which readers are going to walk away with prizes for predicting the right ones? Find out all about the new games chart section that's setting the industry talking

## GAMES YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE .....166

The ACE updated guide to the games you just have to buy. Check them out, and then look at your collection, remember it's coming up to Christmas and give yourself a treat

## GETTING ANIMATED .....178

How do professional animators go about their work. Duncan Evans celebrates the release of Amiga Fantavision (see p56) with a look at modern animation techniques

## GRAND SLAM .....176

Grandslam are kicking off their launch of Saint and Greavsie, the latest football trivia quiz sensation, with an exclusive competition in which you can walk away with £250 worth of gear including a match quality football signed by Saint and Greavsie themselves, plus other goodies

## COMPO RESULTS .....180

Are you in for a big prize? Or even a little one. Find out on page

## THE ACE PRIZE PUZZLE .....182

Have you got a brain the size of a planet? Of course you have, and of course this month you really are going to win that exclusive prize for eggheads

## WIN A FERRARI! .....184

Domark are falling over themselves to reward lucky ACE readers with FIVE Ferraris. Radio controlled, that is, but still loadsafun.

## LOGO COMPO .....186

Logotron are about to release Bad Company and Star Blaze – and you could be first on the street with a FREE copy. Find out more on page 186.

## MYSTERY PAGES ....174,185, 188, 190, & 191

At the time of going to press, these mystery pink pages were still blushing virgins. Find out how they've been corrupted by the ACE Team!



# THE ACE STOCK MARKET

HERE'S WHERE YOU CHECK OUT WHICH GAMES ARE GETTING THE HOTTEST REVIEWS IN MAGAZINES AROUND THE COUNTRY - THE HOT RELEASES YOU SHOULDN'T MISS. YOU CAN ALSO PRACTISE YOUR GAMES MARKET SKILLS BY PREDICTING NEXT MONTH'S FIGURES - AND WINNING SOME GREAT PRIZES! THE ENTRY FORM IS ON PAGE 192.

## THE 8-BIT COUNTER

Here are this month's 8-bit Top Ten titles. Batman swings in with a vengeance - great game, shame about the movie; and System 3, who owe their awesome reputation to the 8-biters of yesteryear are still wowing them at No. 2.

BATMAN	Ocean	Ams, 64, Sp	92.59
MYTH	System 3	64, Sp	91.5
UNTOUCHABLES	Ocean	64, Sp	91.5
GREGORY'S CLOCK	Mastertronic	Ams, Sp	85.25
NEW ZEALAND STORY	Ocean	Ams, 64, Sp	83.67
IRON LORD	UbiSoft	64, Sp	79.75
STRIDER	US Gold	Ams, Sp	77.83
ALTERED BEAST	ACTIVISION	64, Sp	77.75
DRAGON SPIRIT	Domark	Ams, Sp	76.58
PASSING SHOT	Image Works	Ams, Sp	75.16

Runners up include: *Kendo Warrior*, *Operation Gunship*, and *Shinobi*.

## THE 16-BIT COUNTER

If you've got a 16-bit machine, this is where you should be looking to decide how to spend your hard earned pennies this month...

F16 COMBAT PILOT	Digital Integration	Amiga	94.67
BATMAN	Ocean	Amiga	92.04
BOMBER	Activision		91.67
XENON II: MEGABLAST	Image Works	Amiga, ST	91.33
ARTHUR	Infocom	Amiga	88.75
STRIDER	US Gold	Amiga, ST	86.8
POPULOUS: LANDS	Electronic Arts	Amiga, ST	85
WATERLOO	PSS/Mirrorsoft	Amiga, ST	84.75
BLOODWYCH	Image Works	Amiga, ST	83.75
CONTINENTAL CIRCUS	Virgin	Amiga, ST	83.42

Runners-up include *Indiana Jones*, *Oil Imperium*, and *Shadow of the Beast*.

## THE COMPANY COUNTER

Which companies have really been starring in the media this month? Here's where we'll be giving away the biggest prizes each month if you can name the top softcos in the correct order. We give two ratings for each software house: the first is their rating for the month (which determines their current position) and the second is their 'share rating'. This is an index to their past performance, and since this is the first time we've run the listing, all software houses start at 100. Next month, if a company goes down, it's share price will fall; if it goes up, it'll rise.

The positions are determined by the ratings awarded for reviews in different magazines during the current month. This means that certain software houses may not appear in the chart until they have had products reviewed during the survey period. It also means that in the short term software houses who produce only one very highly rated title will score more highly than those who produce several less successful games. In the long term the system will diminish ratings dependent on only a few releases - reflecting the 'shelf life' of the titles in question.

DIGITAL INTEGRATION	94.7	100	MICROILLUSIONS	73.92	100
INFOCOM	89.19	100	DOMARK	73.92	100
HIT SQUAD (OCEAN)	85.75	100	US GOLD	73.77	100
IMAGE WORKS	83.22	100	SYSTEM 3	73	100
MICROPROSE	82.92	100	FIREBIRD	72.76	100
OCEAN	82.21	100	ELITE SYSTEMS	71.89	100
EPYX (US GOLD)	80.88	100	BYTE BACK	68.88	100
MINDSCAPE	80	100	KIXX	68.63	100
16 BLITZ	79.83	100	HEWSON	68.32	100
PSS	79.46	100	GAINSTAR	68.17	100
ARTRONIC	79	100	CODE MASTER	67.33	100
UBI SOFT	78.35	100	RELIN	66.6	100
MICROSTYLE	78.17	100	PLAYERS PREMIER	66.17	100
GRANDSLAM	78	100	RAD (THE EDGE)	65.67	100
ALTERNATIVE	77	100	VIRGIN	65.41	100
PSYGNOSIS	76.83	100	ACCOLADE	65.33	100
SSI	76.19	100	MASTERTRONIC	63.2	100
ELECTRONIC ARTS	75.42	100	ENCORE	62.87	100
INFOGRAMS	75.21	100	GREMLIN	61.6	100
CDS	75.13	100	MELBOURNE HOUSE	57.83	100
ACTUAL SCREENSHOTS	74.5	100	DELPHINE	52.833	100
ACTIVISION	74.09	100	CULT	50.7	100

## THE MACHINE COUNTER

OK, here are this month's top five games for each machine. You can win mega-prizes by naming next month's top five. Check out the coupon on page...

AMIGA		
XENON II: MEGABLAST	Image Works	92.6
BATMAN	Ocean	92.04
F16 COMBAT PILOT	Digital Integration	91.83
STRIDER	US Gold	89.72
BLOODWYCH	Image Works	86.5
ATARI ST		
XENON II: MEGABLAST	Image Works	93.04

NEW ZEALAND STORY	Ocean	86.75
BLOOD MONEY	Psygnosis	86.5
STRIDER	US Gold	85.2
CONTINENTAL CIRCUS	Virgin	84.5
SPECTRUM		
UNTOUCHABLES	Ocean	91.33
BATMAN	Ocean	89.02
NEW ZEALAND STORY	Ocean	85.75
IRON LORD	UbiSoft	82.25
PASSING SHOT	Image Works	79

COMMODORE 64		
BATMAN	Ocean	95.75
UNTOUCHABLES	Ocean	91.67
NEW ZEALAND STORY	Ocean	91.67
CITADEL	Electric Dreams	88.25
TUSKER	System 3	83.75
AMSTRAC CPC		
NEW ZEALAND STORY	Ocean	82.67
STRIDER	US Gold	79.93
DRAGON SPIRIT	Domark	78.25
LICENCE TO KILL	Domark	77.5
SHINOBI	Virgin	73



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XB24-10 24 PIN 240CPS/80QEL slew rate-paper feed (ins per sec.) 3.6 standard buffer 27K max buf 187K super letter quality fonts 4 NLQ/LQ fonts 25 three of which are ORC fonts including code 39 bar code	389.83	448.31
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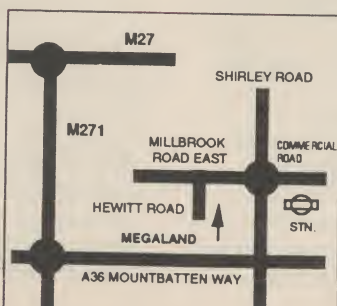
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# THE GAMES YOU HAVE TO HAVE...

SOMETIMES YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO FACE UP TO THE TRUTH. YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS GETTING YOU DOWN, YOUR DOG'S SICK, YOUR FRIENDS ARE CONVINCED IT WAS YOU THAT LOST THE WINNING POOLS COUPON, YOUR MOTHER HAS DECIDED YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR IMAGE, AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND (OR BOYFRIEND) HAS JUST BEEN EATEN BY A ROTTWEILER...THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT...GO OUT AND GET A NEW GAME. AND TO MAKE SURE YOU REALLY SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE, HERE'S A LIST OF GAMES YOU'VE JUST GOT TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION.

## ARCADE STYLE

Including coin-op conversions. Games with a high fun factor and plenty of addictive action feature in this category.

### ARKANOID

Imagine ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £14.95dk ● Atari XL/XE £8.95cs ● Atari ST £14.95dk ● MSX £8.95cs ● IBM PC £19.95dk

Conversion from *Arkanoid* the coin-op, in its turn the best version of the classic *Breakout*. Simple in concept: the player controls a bat at the base of the screen, whizzing it left and right. The object is to keep a small ball in play, bouncing it off the bat to destroy formations of bricks in the top half of the screen. Eliminate all the bricks and move on to the next of 33 screens. Clever extra features contribute to the addictiveness. As a faithful coin-op conversion, *Arkanoid* comes out top, but for a different slant on the same theme and some nifty music, try ASL's *Impact*, which also builds up the difficulty levels more gradually.

★ ACE CLASSIC

### BOUNDER

Gremlin Graphics ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £9.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £13.95dk

A great arcade bounce-em-up, and very addictive too. You guide a ball as it bounces from one platform to another, high above the vertically scrolling landscape. Land on marked squares and you can stay aloft longer or gain a mystery bonus. Fill in a gap or hit one of the game's many nasties, however, and you'll lose a life. Bonus bouncing sections at the end of each level help vary the pace, and those tough gaps really keep you coming back for more. Bright, witty graphics, great music – and it's so playable.

★ ACE CLASSIC

### BUBBLE BOBBLE

Firebird ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £14.95dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk

Playability is the essence of this two-player coin-op conversion. You and a friend play bubble-blowing dinosaurs, travelling through 100 maze-and-platform screens, fighting off the 'bullies' by encapsulating them in your bubbles to turn them into juicy fruit. More firepower and various bonuses await as you reach the more difficult later screens. Enormously good fun, if a little on the cutesy side. Can also be played as one player against the computer.

★ ACE RATED 958

### CONQUEROR

Superior ● Archimedes £24.95dk (Amiga and ST versions under development)

Drive around in your very own tank! Blast the enemy in close combat and plan your strategy for the campaign. This is a tricky game to get to grips with, but if you persevere you'll find you soon become mesmerised by the thing. If you ain't got a 1Mb Archie though – forget it!

★ ACE RATED 931

### ELIMINATOR

Hewson ● Spectrum £7.99cs £12.99dk ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £19.99dk

Graphically wonderful roadway blast-em-up by John Phillips, which will twist your joystick inside-out. It'll even have you driving on the ceiling. Though it's tough to get to grips with at first, the addiction level's so great you'll keep coming back for more.

★ ACE RATED 904

### EXOLON

Hewson ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £14.95dk

Graphically superb horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up in which you run, duck and jump your way along a planet's surface blasting away at alien defences. A gun and a missile launcher are used to blast the foes, but if things are still too tough then you can grab an exoskeleton for extra protection and fire power.

★ ACE CLASSIC

### NEW ZEALAND STORY

Ocean ● Spectrum £8.95cs, C64 £9.95cs, Amstrad £9.95cs, ST £19.99, Amiga £24.99

Although pipped at the post in a head to head with *Rainbow Islands*, *New Zealand Story* is not a game to be ruled out. It is immense fun to play, provides lots of varied action across many levels. Definitely worth checking out.

★ ACE RATED 875

### OIDS

Mirrorsoft ● Atari ST £19.99dk

A magnificent *Thrustish* blast. The Oids are relying on you to save them, but the Biocreates aren't going to let them go without throwing missiles, rockets and a number of other weapons at you. Included with the program is an edit facility that allows you to design your own planetoids – great stuff!

★ ACE RATED 969

### PITSTOP 2

Epyx/US Gold ● Available only on Epyx Epics compilation ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● IBM PC £29.95dk

(in compilation with *Winter Games* and *Summer Games 2*) Thrilling racing game where the screen is split into two and you can race the computer or a friend. Lots of different Grand Prix circuits, tyre blow-outs and of course the all-important pitstops guarantee to give you hand cramp and your brain a real racing treat.

★ ACE CLASSIC

### POWER-DROME

Electronic Arts ● Atari ST £24.95dk

This superb arcade-style futuristic driving simulation will have you enthralled for months to come. It may not be terribly easy to get straight into but it's well worth persevering with. You'll be playing this for months.

★ ACE RATED 925

### PURPLE SATURN DAY

Exxos ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● Amiga £24.95

A terrific mix of games that delivers punch both audio and visual. The consistently good gameplay ensures you'll enjoy playing each sub-game time and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang of but master it and you'll be pleased you persevered.

★ ACE RATED 912

### RAINBOW ISLANDS

Firebird, Spectrum £9.95cs £14.95dk, C64 £9.99cs \$14.99dk, Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk, ST £24.99, Amiga £24.99

The sequel to *Bubble Bobble* is nothing short of fantastic. The graphics and sound are superb, as is the gameplay. One of the best (and cutest) arcade conver-

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One of the  
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sions of the year that should not be missed.  
★ **ACE RATED 934**

## RVF

Microstyle, ST £24.99,  
Amiga £29.99

RVF offers a near endless supply of fast paced bike action as you race your Honda RVF. Attention to detail is paid out all along the route with your rider giving the bike a push start after a crash.

An excellent mix of arcade and simulation.  
★ **ACE RATED 915**

## SPIDERTRON-IC

Ere International ● Atari ST £19.95dk

Guide your spider-like character around the game area, collecting coloured panels in the correct order. The built-in construction set means you'll be knocking out your own levels till the cows come home.  
★ **ACE RATED 903**

## SUMMER GAMES

Epyx/US Gold ● C64 £9.95 cs £14.95dk ● IBM PC £29.95dk

Epyx sporting simulations are of high quality but none have quite captured the playability and style of the original *Summer Games* and its immediate successor, *Summer Games 2*. One to six players can take part in high jump, gymnastics, spring-board diving, clay pigeon shooting, swimming, pole vault – and others – with lovely large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Control of your athlete can be complex so practice is recommended.  
★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## SUPER SPRINT

Electric Dreams ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk  
Amstrad £9.99cs Spectrum £9.99cs ● Atari ST £19.99dk

One of the better coin-op conversions currently available. With up to three players all competing at once, the action is fast

and furious and it will take a finely-tuned car to complete some of the more tortuous circuits that appear later in the game.  
★ **ACE RATED 907**

## THRUST

Firebird ● Spectrum £1.99cs ● C64 £1.99cs ● Amstrad £1.99cs

Terrifyingly sensitive controls and a large helping of real-life physics make this budget title an absolute must. Flying down through the caverns of an enemy-held planet, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gun turrets without crashing into the tunnel walls. Tough enough as it is, but then you've got to make the return journey with a heavy load slung under your craft. Very mean, very addictive.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## URIDIUM

Hewson ● Spectrum £8.95cs ● C64 £9.95cs £12.95dk ● BBC £9.95cs £14.95dk

The piece de resistance of scrolling shoot-em-ups: blast the dreadnought and attacking ships while dodging around any large structures. Great metallic-looking dreadnoughts and the smoothest scrolling you'll ever see put this head and shoulders above the opposition. A game not to be missed, especially now that C64 versions come packaged with the excellent *Paradroid*.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## ZARCH / VIRUS

Superior Software ● Archimedes £19.95dk ● Firebird (16 and 8-bit versions) Amiga £19.95dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk ● Some 8-bit versions under development

A solid three dimensional shoot-em-up with such graphic perfection and timelessly addictive gameplay that it became an instant classic. Now the 16-bit versions have arrived and they're just as good as the 32-bit versions.

★ **ACE RATED 981**

# ADVENTURES

After a brief surge of RPG-related popularity, the traditional text-entry adventure is rapidly disappearing. But for those of you who savour the powers of the imagination, the verbal twist, and the thrill of encountering other characters, this game genre still has much to recommend it. Here are some of the all-time great computer fantasies...

## BEYOND ZORK

Infocom/Activision ● C64 £19.99dk ● PC £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● Atari ST £24.99dk

Infocom's attempt to muscle in on the role-playing market is a great success. Locate the fabulous Coconut of Quendor in a game that combines the wit and ingenuity of one of the world's most original software companies with state-of-the-art parsing and gameplay. Text-only, but with an on-screen mapping facility.

★ **ACE RATED 902**

## CORRUPTION

Rainbird ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● PC £24.95dk ● Spectrum £15.95dk ● C64 £17.95dk ● Amstrad 6128 £19.95dk

This tale of insider dealings, infidelity and crooked business deals is unlikely to appeal to adventurers who prefer to wander through vast dungeon networks seeking treasure. But for those who are fed up with traditional adventuring, it's like a breath of fresh air. Superb graphics, great atmosphere and a nail-biting plot makes this a terrific game that grips from the start.

★ **ACE RATED 920**

## FISH

Magnetic Scrolls ● PC £24.99dk Amiga £24.99dk

More gameplay than *Corruption*, better game design than *Jinxter*, and not as quirky as *The*

*Pawn*. This is definitely MS's best release since *Guild Of Thieves*. Good stuff indeed.

★ **ACE RATED**

## GUILD OF THIEVES

Rainbird ● C64 £19.95dk ● Spectrum £15.95dk ● Amstrad 6128 £19.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● PC £24.95dk

One of Britain's newer adventure software houses – Magnetic Scrolls – managed to produce a traditional treasure hunt with superb graphics and some very tricky puzzles. Powerful parser helps to create a convincing game world with humour and imagination.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## INGRID'S BACK

Level 9 ● Atari ST £19.95dk

A great follow-up to *Gnome Ranger*. Level 9 have really got to grips with the use of characters in their games and how to program them very effectively.

★ **ACE RATED 920**

## JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Rainbird ● C64 £14.95cs ● Spectrum 128 £14.95cs ● Amstrad £14.95cs £19.95dk ● PC £19.95dk ● Amiga £19.95dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk

Level 9 have put together three of their classic releases, *Colossal Adventure*, *Dungeon Adventure*

and *Adventure Quest* in one bundle. The games have been updated with graphics and larger vocabularies and are as close to the original spirit of adventuring as you're likely to find.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## LURKING HORROR

Infocom/Mediagenic ● C64 £19.99dk ● ST £24.99 I Amiga £24.99 ● PC £24.99

Infocom's tribute to H.P. Lovecraft and the horror-fantasy genre sends you into a cold sweat as you discover something very nasty lurking beneath your college laboratory. Superb text-only game that defies you to play it after dark...

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## TIME AND MAGIK

Mandarin ● Spectrum £14.95cs £14.95dk ● C64 £14.95cs £14.95dk

● Amstrad £14.95cs £14.95dk ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £19.99dk ● PC £19.99dk

This compilation of the Level 9 games, *Lords Of Time*, *Red Moon* and *The Price Of Magik* have been re-vamped with better parsing, bigger vocabularies and pictures added. Superb value if you don't already own them.

★ **ACE RATED 919**

## ZORK ZERO

Infocom Versions due out about now. Watch this space for price info. Highly enjoyable with a variety of challenges that make for instant addiction. A bit more character interaction would have made this a real humdinger, but even so it remains one of the best games of the year so far.

★ **ACE RATED**

# PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategic thinking, then it's a puzzle game you want.

## BONE-CRUNCHER

Superior Software ● C64 £9.95cs £11.95dk ● Amiga £14.95

At first sight this recent release may appear to be nothing more than a boulderdash rip-off. However there are a number of innovative gameplay features which give Bonecruncher a feel all of its own. Highly recommended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them.

★ **ACE RATED 948 – AMIGA**

## BOULDERDASH

Prism Leisure Corporation ● Spectrum £2.99cs ● C64 £2.99cs ● Amstrad £2.99cs

A game that has everything – instant addiction,

long-term challenge, frenetic excitement as the clock ticks down and extremely tricky puzzles. You must collect jewels hidden in caverns, digging away earth and boulders to get at them. Boulders can drop and cause you serious damage, while the jewels are often hidden by seemingly impenetrable walls. Complex but great fun. Boulderdash is a classic you can't afford to miss in its budget incarnation.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## DEFLEKTOR

Gremlin/Vortex ● C64 £9.99cs ● Spectrum £7.99cs ● ST £19.95dk

Optics are the order of the day here (not the spirit dispensers) as the player tries to connect a laser beam to a receiver and at the same time destroy a

number of cells that are on screen as well. You'll need to make full use of the mirrors, fibre-optic conduits and polarising and refracting blocks if you're to achieve your aim. Clear the first screen and you'll only have 59 more to do. Fascinating stuff that's horribly addictive.

★ **ACE RATED 906** - ST

## NEBULUS

Hewson ● C64 £9.99cs  
£14.99 dk ● Atari ST  
£14.99 dk

Guide pogo to the top of eight towers using the spiral of platforms, lifts and ledges that form the route. It's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and addiction, added to which is the rotary scroll, thus making it a good-looking, playable winner of a game.

★ **ACE RATED 943** - C64

## SENTINEL

Firebird ● Spectrum £9.95cs ● C64 £9.95cs  
£14.95dk ● Amstrad  
£9.95cs £14.95 dk ●  
Atari ST £19.95dk ●  
Amiga £19.99dk

Bizarre and compelling strategy game played over the chequered surface of a planet dominated by the Sentinel. Fundamentally you have to absorb energy while trying to stop the Sentinel from absorbing yours. A clean brain and fast trigger finger are both necessary in this very original and large - 10,000 possible landscapes - game.

★ **ACE RATED 963** - AMIGA

## SKULL DIGGERS

Nexus ● Atari ST £19.95

Boulderdash clone that completely outdoes the original on this particular machine. Again (see Boulderdash above) you're digging for diamonds in caverns over a hundred different screens - with a time limit for each screen. Skulldiggers scores on playability (easier screens to begin with and a choice of starting point) and its entertaining two-player option.

★ **ACE RATED 919** - ST

## SPORE

Bulldog ● C64 £1.99cs ●  
Amstrad £1.99cs ● Spectrum  
£1.99cs

The winning combination of strategy, frenzied blasting and great graphics make Spore a worthy full-priced release - what a bargain then to be able to pick it up for £1.99!

★ **ACE RATED 919** - C64

## TETRIS

Mirrorsoft ● Spectrum  
£8.99cs ● C64 £8.99cs  
£12.99dk ● Amstrad  
£8.99cs £12.99 dk ●  
Atari ST £19.95dk ●  
Amiga £19.99dk ● IBM PC  
£19.99dk

A fascinating geometrical oddity, this Russian puzzler turns the obscure mathematical topic of packing into a cult game. One at a time, shapes fall downwards into a rectangular playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile up until they reach the top of the screen; your task is to guide them down and pack them tightly so that doesn't happen. Different versions have proved to be rather variable in their arcade aspects, but the brilliantly simple idea behind them means they're well worth a look whatever your machine.

★ **ACE RATED 959** - C64

## THINK!

Firebird ● C64 £1.99cs ●  
Amstrad £1.99cs ● Spectrum  
£1.99cs

Originally released by Ariolasoft at full price, but now available for a fraction of that from Firebird. It's a horribly addictive game played on a 6x6 grid - either one or two player - in which you attempt to connect four counters, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## XOR

Logotron ● BBC £9.95cs  
£12.85dk ● Amstrad  
£9.95cs £14.95dk ● Spectrum  
£7.95cs

Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two shields, and collecting masks through 15 mazes, which

increase in complexity as you progress. Also in later stages, fish and chickens lie in wait, often blocking the masks and just waiting to fall on you and bring your quest to a premature

end. Later still, things hot up as bombs, transporters and dolls conspire against you. Smooth scrolling, simple graphics, this one requires planning to complete successfully.

# SPECIALS

Original works that are simply unclassifiable feature in this section.

## ATF

Digital Integration ● C64  
£8.95cs £12.95dk ●  
Amstrad £8.95cs  
£12.95dk ● Spectrum  
£8.95cs £13.95dk

Excellent combat/flight simulator that's a bit of a change for Digital Integration, the simulation specialist. The emphasis is on solid action, the result being a sure-fire hit.

★ **ACE RATED 956** - SPECTRUM

## DARK SIDE

Incentive ● C64 £9.95cs  
£14.95dk ● Amstrad  
£9.95cs £14.95dk ● Spectrum  
£9.95cs £14.95dk

The second game using the Freescape programming system, which sets more of an arcade challenge. The 3-D graphics are again superb as are the tasks and puzzles.

★ **ACE RATED 915** - AMSTRAD

## ELITE

Firebird ● C64 £14.95cs  
£17.95dk ● Amstrad  
£12.95cs £14.95dk ●  
Spectrum £14.95cs ●  
BBC £13.95cs £14.95dk  
(available from Superior  
software)

Still the best space trading game, Elite set a standard for other companies to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a shooting and trading effort set across several galaxies, with plenty of variety to the game play. You can trade legal goods in (relatively) safe systems, or run the gauntlet of pirates in the galaxies' danger spots with your hold full of contraband. Either way there's a nice line in zero-G dogfighting, and as big a task as

you'll find anywhere.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## INCREDIBLE SHRINKING SPHERE

Electric Dreams ● C64  
£8.99cs £14.99dk ●  
Amstrad £9.99cs  
£14.99dk ● Spectrum  
£9.99cs £14.99dk ● Atari  
ST £19.99dk ● Amiga  
£24.99dk

A manic maze world where mass, size and inertia combine to provide wicked gameplay. Tricky puzzles and endless nasty obstacles will have you rolling around in delight.

★ **ACE RATED 923** - C64

## M1 TANK PLATOON

Microprose ● PC  
£39.99dk

This is a welcome break from flight-sims that boasts enough detail to keep even the most compulsive nit-picker happy, and at the same time has a breadth of challenge and combat scenarios that should satisfy the most ardent gamer. A winner.

★ **ACE RATED 926**

## MAGNETRON-

Firebird ● C64 £8.95cs  
£12.95dk ● Spectrum  
£8.95cs £12.95dk

Puzzles and action Steve Turner style. Save the world by dismantling eight satellites. Steal parts from enemy droids to upgrade your own droid and hopefully make your job a little easier. The ideal game for Quazatron fans looking for a similar, new challenge.

★ **ACE RATED 904** - SPECTRUM

## QUEDEX

Thalamus ● C64 £9.95cs  
£14.95dk

In this impressively challenging game you must steer a metallic ball through ten different screens of mazes, bonuses and obstacles, all within a set time limit. This simple game concept has a host of added features to make it particularly pleasing: you can carry over unused time to the next screen, for example, and tackle the different screens or 'planes' in any order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play.

★ **ACE RATED 934** - C64

## SPINDIZZY

Electric Dreams ● C64  
£9.95cs £14.95dk ●  
Spectrum £9.95cs ●  
Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95  
Disk

Tremendous stuff; steer your spinning top over tough obstacles and collect jewels, against a fiendish time limit. The game landscape is a vast system of catwalks, ramps, towers and trampolines surrounded by lethal drops - and NO safety rails. Floor switches activate lifts and bridge traps, but tripping them in the right order can be harder than it looks. A few bad guys and a lot of nice touches, but the explorations the thing.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## STARGLIDER II

Rainbird ● Atari ST  
£24.95dk ● Amiga  
£24.99dk

One of the finest examples of a game using vector graphics to their full advantage, gets the solid 3D treatment and comes out looking every bit a winner. You've got a large task to complete and there's plenty of Egon's to destroy, making this combination of blasting and exploration that stands head above the competition.

## WARNING!

Games can damage your health. ACE recently handed a copy of *Ultima V* (see the RPG section on the next page) to a member of a leading City institution who 'never played games.' The gentleman, unfortunately, had a PC at home. When we attempted to contact the man the next day, we were told he was 'off sick'. He remained on the sick list for three weeks. At the end of the three weeks, ACE received a complete guide to...*Ultima V*...

★ **ACE RATED 927** - ST

## STAR TREK V

Mindscape ● PC £34.99dk  
● MAC £34.99dk

This is easily the best interpretation of Star Trek yet. The gameplay provides absorbing and challenging hours of fun. A must for Trekkies and an entertaining space strategy/simulator for everyone else.

★ **ACE RATED 930**

## TAU CETI/ACADEMY

CRL ● C64 £9.95cs  
£14.95dk ● Amstrad  
£9.95cs £14.95dk ●  
Spectrum £9.95cs ● Atari  
ST £19.99dk ● Amiga  
£19.95

Flight simulator/shoot 'em up and its sequel which are both incredibly smooth and well put together. The attention to detail is impeccable as you set off on hair-raising missions as a space cadet. In Academy you get to design your own space skimmer craft as well.

★ **ACE CLASSIC**

## TOTAL ECLIPSE

Incentive ● C64 £9.95cs  
£12.95dk ● Amstrad  
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## RPG

Role-playing games have exerted an enormous influence on modern game-styles. They combine the atmosphere of text adventures with the action of arcade games and the brain exercise of strategy – but their graphical presentation tends to be weaker than other game genres. Gameplay centres around developing characters by raising their experience and skill levels in conflict with other, computer-controlled nasties. All that – and a quest too...

£14.95dk

The third game using the Freescape system is a bit of a departure from the first two, but it's still an incredible game. In total eclipse you're battling against time back in the 1930's trying to prevent the moon exploding. For arcade adventurers who love puzzles, the Freescape system is a godsend.  
★ ACE RATED 907 - AMSTRAD

### WIZBALL

OCEAN ● C64 £8.95cs  
£14.95dk ● Amstrad  
£8.95cs £12.95dk ●  
Spectrum £8.95cs  
£14.95dk

Become Wizball and conquer the 'colour creatures' which are intent on eliminating the spectrum and rendering the landscape grey and drab. One of the most playable games around, despite the simple scenario.

ACE Classic

### THE BARD'S TALE II

Electronic Arts, C64  
£16.95, Amiga £24.95dk

The highly successful predecessor to Bards Tale III. BT II has the advantage of being slightly easier to advance. The Amiga version features some very nice sampled monk chants when you enter a temple and excellently coloured graphics. And of course, you can update your favourite characters, their

attributes and equipment for use in BT III.

★ ACE RATED 920

### THE BARD'S TALE III

Electronic Arts ● C64  
£14.95dk

The latest *Bard's Tale* game offers a number of refinements over its predecessors (all of which are still well worth taking a good look at). First, the graphics are better animated. Second, there are ranged combat routines which take careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. Finally, the game's large and represents excellent value for money.

★ ACE RATED 920

### BATTLETECH

Infocom, PC £29.95, ST

Battletech features some incredible cartoon sequences, arcade style action, role play and strategy. In short a complete, full game. A brilliant RPG purchase even though it missed out on an Ace rating.  
★ ACE RATED 801

### DUNGEON MASTER

Electronic Arts ● C64  
£14.95dk

Quoted as being a "milestone in Advanced Computer Entertainment", *Dungeon Master* offers 14 levels, loads of spells, atmospheric

graphics and sound. All going to make *Dungeon Master* one of the best roleplaying adventures to have appeared on any machine.

★ ACE RATED 949

### POOL OF RADIANCE

US GOLD /SSI  
● C64 £14.99dk

SSI were very brave to attempt to capture the complex concept of the

AD&D system on a computer, but they managed superbly. An RPG-influenced game that will appeal to not only AD&D fans but to anyone looking for an enthralling game that will keep them

playing for months.  
★ ACE RATED 921

### ULTIMA V

OriginSystems/Microprose  
● C64 £24.95dk ● PC  
£29.95 ● ST/Amiga to be announced

## BRAIN GAMES

Fed up with mindless blasting? Want a game that offers you an opponent who's worthy of your skills? Then this is your section...

### CHESS MASTER 2000

Electronic Arts ● C64  
£9.95cs £14.95dk ●  
Amiga £24.95dk ● Atari  
ST £24.95dk ● IBM PC  
£24.95dk

Strongest chess game on the Amiga, with excellent graphics, 2D or 3D viewpoint, 12 levels of difficulty and all the playing options you could wish for. Plus some fairly nifty speech synthesis.

★ ACE CLASSIC

### COLOSSUS CHESS 4

CDS ● C64 £9.95cs  
£14.95dk ● Amstrad  
£9.95cs £14.95dk ●  
Spectrum £9.95

Best bet for 8-bit machine owners, with a choice of 2D or 3D view, umpteen levels of difficulty, and a

myriad options which enable you to play, watch, work out chess problems, etc against a fine computer opponent.

★ ACE CLASSIC

### COLOSSUS MAH JONG

CDS ● C64 £9.99cs  
£14.99dk ● Amstrad  
£9.99cs £14.99dk

Rummy-like oriental game of strategy and chance. A tutor program and a short manual make this an easy to use and highly entertaining piece of software for veterans and novices alike..

★ ACE RATED 937 - C64

### INFOGRAMMES' BRIDGE

Infogrames ● Amstrad  
£12.95cs £15.95dk ●  
MSX £12.95

Graphically the best of all contract bridge simulations, with large playing cards depicted against a suitably green baize background. Plays a good game (for a computer, which after all is a bit short in the imagination and flair department), and features a wide range of options and bidding conventions which you can toggle of according to your style.

★ ACE CLASSIC

### POWERPLAY

Arcana ● C64 £8.95cs  
£14.95dk ● Amstrad  
£8.95cs £14.95dk ●  
Amiga £19.95dk ● Atari  
ST £19.95dk

If you want to try out your general knowledge, we reckon you'd be better off with this original and challenging combination of

strategy game and quiz than with the admittedly monster selling Trivial Pursuits. Powerplay is graphically very pretty in its setting on Mount Olympus, home of the Gods.

★ ACE RATED 935 - Amiga

### SCRABBLE

Leisure Genius ● C64  
£12.95cs £14.95dk ●  
Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95  
● IBM PC £24.95dk

The hugely popular word game translated very successfully onto the micro. Fast, excellent display, and a suprisingly large vocabulary (even if it does include some strange looking words on some occasions). Good enough to give even strong human opponents a tough game at the higher levels.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## WAR GAMES

Fancy yourself as a master of grand strategy, marshalling hordes of troops and sending them off to do battle on your behalf? Look no further than the ACE war games section...

### ARNHEM

CCS, Spectrum £8.95cs,  
Amstrad £9.95cs, C64  
£9.95cs

One of the oldest quality wargames featured in the section, Arnham was easily the best in the field. It has all the expected atmosphere, five separate scenarios and one of the toughest computer opponents you could ever wait to meet. A thoroughly absorbing wargame which can be classed as one of the old masters.

★ ACE RATED 910

### CONFLICT EUROPE

Mirrorsoft, ST 24.99,  
Amiga £24.99, PC TBA

The 16 bit progression of Theatre Europe. Lots of extra graphical and sound effects. The computer controlled intelligence was marginally sophisticated but still enough to give a challenging game. The correct balance between strategy and excitement throughout. Great for beginners and intermediate players.

★ ACE RATED 882

### THEATRE EUROPE

PSS, Spectrum £9.95cs,  
C64 £0.95cs £14.95dk,  
Amstrad £9.95cs  
£14.95dk

The perfect game for 8 bit owners who go green with envy when they look at Conflict Europe. Theatre Europe is the forerunner to the excellent 16 bit game. The graphics and overall play are not as sophisticated, but on the whole it still is one heck of a game.

★ ACE RATED 915

### UMS

Rainbird, ST £24.95, PC  
£24.95, Macintosh  
£34.95, Amiga £24.95

Probably the greatest war game to date. UMS' unique 3D systems enables the creation of almost any battle in history. As well as a very sophisticated computer opponents yet. On top of this are add on scenarios and a very neat construction kit to keep you going for even longer. An essential purchase

★ ACE RATED 907

# FLIGHT SIMULATIONS

How about flying the latest US Stealth Fighter on a mission over Siberia? Or perhaps a quick flight over Hawaii would be more relaxing? Computer flight simulations can fulfill any flight of fancy

## BATTLEHAWKS 1942

Lucasfilm Games/US Gold ● ST £24.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● PC £24.95dk

A WWII naval air combat simulator covering the four most important battles of the 1942 Pacific war. For knuckle-whitening action this one has everything – the sense of 'being there' is tremendous. Thrilling and surprisingly addictive stuff.

★ ACE RATED 928

## BOMBER

Activision ● Spectrum £14.99cs £19.99dk ● C64 £14.99cs £19.99dk ● Amstrad £14.99cs £19.99dk ● ST £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● PC £34.99dk

Vector Grafix has spent a long time on this one – and it certainly shows. The game gets the balance just right between convincing simula-

tion and entertaining game. Highly recommended.

★ ACE RATED 925

## CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER

Electronic Arts ● Spectrum ● C64 ● CPC ● ST ● Amiga ● PC £24.95dk

Fly a multitude of aircraft from an early bi-plane to the Space Shuttle. It's entertainingly different from your standard flight sim and there's so much in this game that it will take many hours of instructive fun to experience and master all the available options.

★ ACE RATED 912

## F-16 COMBAT PILOT

Digital Integration ● ST £24.95dk ● Amiga

£24.95dk ● PC £24.95dk

This took nine person years to develop, and you can feel that quality of work when playing it – it's one of the most realistic flight sims on the market. If you are a connoisseur of flight simulators then this is an essential addition to your collection.

★ ACE RATED 970

## FALCON

Spectrum Holobyte/Mirrorsoft ● ST £24.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● PC £24.95dk ● MAC

If you really want the terror, exhilaration and sheer everything-happens-at-once confusion of combat flying, this game delivers. Make no mistake, this game is the real thing. An essential purchase for fast-jet fans.

★ ACE RATED 945

## FLIGHT SIMULATOR II

Sublogic ● C64 £39.95dk ● ST £49.95dk ● Amiga £49.95dk ● PC £49.95dk ● MAC £49.95dk

The flight sim that put the genre on to the map. Thoroughly realistic flight sim of a domestic Cessna plane, which is even used by flight schools to train would be pilots. Can be enhanced by a variety of Scenery Disks.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## INTERCEPTOR

Electronic Arts ● Amiga £24.95dk

A low level flight sim with a high level of fun. Purists may dispute the label 'simulator' – it certainly wouldn't train you to fly a real life Hornet – but this program combines realism and gameplay far too well for that to matter. If you want seat-of-the-pants air combat action, miraculous graphics and NO six month training period, look no further!

★ ACE RATED 934

# RACING SIMULATIONS

In the first of an occasional series, ACE takes a special look at a particular game genre and the games that are worth a look, this month it's the turn of the venerable racing-simulation, as originally mentioned in our Burning Rubber feature in Issue 26...

## LOMBARD RAC RALLY

Mandarin ● ST ● Amiga ● PC

Race through many types of terrain, such as mountain or forest, and through many types of weather condition, such as fog or night. The game has a nice atmosphere, and though the variety of gameplay may be a little low, it's still a game you'd be playing for a good while.

## FERRARI FORMULA ONE

Electronic Arts ● ST £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● PC £24.99dk

A bit old this one, but still a game that was way ahead of

its time to start with. Take the wheel of a Formula One Ferrari racer on some of the most famous racecourses in the world. A true thoroughbred.

## R.V.F.

Microstyle ● ST £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk

The champion in the Best Sprite Based Racing Game stakes, and a superb simulation, this one puts you into the world of performance bike racing on none other than the Honda RVF750. Brilliant graphics, brilliant sound, brilliant game.

## STUNT CAR RACER

Microstyle ● Spectrum

£9.99cs £14.99dk ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk ● ST £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● PC £24.99dk

This places itself in the annals of computer history as being one of the most amazing spectacles to watch, let alone play. The game is first-person perspective, with the outside world made up of really fast smooth filled vectors, and the impression of realism is unbelievable. An amazing experience, and a clear winner. Where can things go from here?

## SUPER HANG ON

Electric Dreams ● Spectrum £9.99cs ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Amstrad

£9.99cs £14.99dk ● ST £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk

Not so much a simulation as a perfect arcade conversion of a brilliant bike racing Sega coin-op. Great game, excellent conversion.

## THE DUEL - TEST DRIVE II

Accolade ● C64 ● ST ● Amiga ● PC ● MAC

Accolade tried to right all the Test Drive wrongs with this sequel, and to an extent they succeeded. There's nothing serious about the game. It's just a lot of fun. It doesn't claim to be technically or visually accurate, but why should it?

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# LOVE AND PASSION IN THE MODERN KITCHEN (DIGITAL PASSION II) — THE PLOT OF THE SOUND TRACK OF THE MOVIE OF THE NEWSPAPER SERIALISATION OF THE BOOK OF THE ORIGINAL PINK DRAMA IN TWO PARTS (OF WHICH THIS IS THE SECOND AND FINAL, ABSOLUTELY CONCLUSIVE, NO-HOLDS BARRED, TEAR JERKING, ACE 900+ RATED BIT)

by Bettina Throckmorton

First a short biographical note: Bettina Throckmorton began her long and distinguished career as one of Britain's top writers working as a humble copy typist for *My Woman* (a pioneering weekly for the modern woman and her family). It was not long before Bettina had proved her worth and was elevated to the position of fiction editor.

During her time with *My Woman* she was fortunate enough to have several pieces of her own fiction published in the same magazine during her stay there. Over the following years her superlative works were seen in a number of other magazines, all of which she also served as an authoritative and

experienced fiction editor.

Such is the respect her work has generated in this country, that eminent critic, Jack Greeble of the *Pig Breeder's Chronicle* has said of her: 'Bluidy 'ell, 'oo the 'eck wrote this \*@#!'. All it remains for us to say, is that we are very proud to be the first Computer publication to feature Ms. Throckmorton's fiction (the first piece in her proposed *Post Cyberpunk* series), and are very sad that it is not possible for us to offer her a position as Fiction Editor on ACE. Sit back, relax, and enjoy...'

## THE STORY SO FAR

Vile fatty Norbert, was quite happily vapourising unsuspecting aliens on his Nintega when his disk drive suddenly died. On

investigating the 'accident' he contracted the dreaded finger virus, which he duly passed on to his mummy. We left the tale with mother about to fall desperately in love with an electric toaster. Confused? You soon will be, when you've read the final exciting installment of *DIGITAL PASSION*!

Norbert looked on astonished as his formerly drip-py mother began to advance lasciviously on the toaster. 'Oh well,' he thought, 'since she's in a domestic mood, I'd better make the most of it...'

"Mom," he bawled, "I'm 'ungry, where's my tea then?"

"Shut up you little creep!", she snapped, turning on him. Her eyes had turned a deep red, and her face was beginning to look as if it had been rendered on a CGA PC (yes, it really was that disgusting!).

"Go and get if for me... I want it now...", she croaked, her voice sounding more and more like a naff speech synthesiser.

"G..G..Get what

mom?," asked Norbet, his belly quivering visibly.

"IT! IT!", she screamed, "The Nunto-ga..."

"Oh," he smiled, a little nervously, "you mean the Nint..."

"Just GET IT..."

Norbert ran up the stairs as fast as his fat little legs could carry him, just noticing his mother making overtures to the microwave as he reached the landing.

When Norbert finally reappeared with the damaged Nintega, a tremendous transformation had overcome the woman who had once been his mother. She had regressed to... horror of horrors... ultra-low resolution in only four colours. As she animated across the kitchen towards him (at a feeble 18 frames per second) he was almost violently sick. She was actually causing attribute clash all over the place.

Wasting not even a nanosecond, Norbert reached for his trusty Nintega light Phaser, but, before he had a chance to

aim, his menacing mother had snatched the console from his sweaty hands and began kissing it passionately while making appalling sampled slurping sounds.

Poor Norbert was about to retreat when there was an almighty flash and a burst of flame. When the smoke cleared the kitchen was full of all the sprites Norb had ever put an end to, and all of them had been expanded to twenty times their original size. Norbert, however, was too intent on the scene in the middle of the kitchen floor to worry about anything else.

His mother was standing face to face with an absolutely enormous sprite. Her eye's were agog, for the beast before her had the largest pixels she had ever seen and was currently flexing them provocatively. Norb was just wondering who this creature was when a tiny voice from one of the other sprites piped up (actually it was Henry aka Smorgon). "I don't believe it! By Clive Sinclair, if it

isn't N'Gar Thrombobo".

This seemingly innocuous statement was enough to spark of a chorus of cries like, 'We thought you were dead,' and 'N'Gar, our hero,' or 'Hurrah! Hurrah for good old N'Gar!' "Freinds, Sprites, Countrymen, lend me your megacycles," boomed the dreaded N'Gar. "Yes, it's true, I was dead, gone for ever, consigned for all eternity to the darkest corner of a corrupted 3.5 inch diskette. But now, thanks to the love of this fair lady, N'Gar Thrombobo has risen to once again become the scourge of games players everywhere..." So saying, he scooped Norbert's quivering mother into his arms and headed off, through crowds of cheering sprites, into a perfect colour-graduated sunset...

## THE ABSOLUTE END!

..sniff.. sniff.. I don't think I can take any more, that's so beautiful. That's all for now, but look out for more pink fiction at a copy of ACE near you soon!

TO

01. A  
02. A  
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73. Sta  
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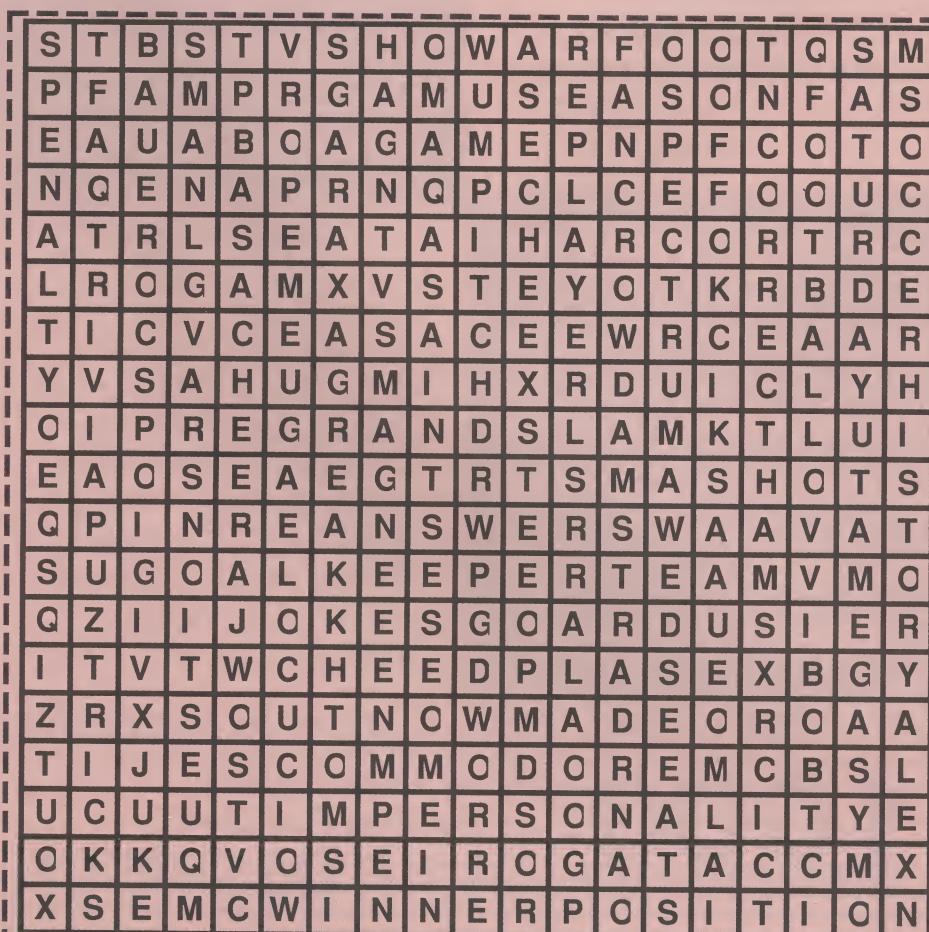
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m  
✓ T  
✓ O  
✓ Ex  
✓ Th  
✓ Se  
✓ Sil  
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✓ Fu

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Super  
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1040S  
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Mega  
Mega  
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# THE ART OF ANIMATION

**Duncan Evans has been playing around with Domark's *Fantavision* – and has been driven to investigate animation techniques in general. Here's what he found out...**

Traditional cartoon animation technique has changed little since Walt Disney and his team of animators produced such classics as *Snow White* and *Fantasia*. It is the filming technology and animation tools and aids which have developed.

The basics of cartoon animation still revolve around key drawings and the steps in between. Usually the animator will draw an object in two key positions and then mark down how many in between positions are needed to achieve the desired result. An assistant then has the task of drawing the in between stages. The very first in between stage is called the breakdown point, and if significant is often drawn by the animator.

One of the important techniques of 'in betweening' is that those stages are often not spaced at regular intervals between the breakdown point and the key drawings. To achieve such effects as the slow in, so called because the action slows into a final position, there needs to be more 'in between' towards the end of the sequence. The converse of this is the slow out where more 'in between' are positioned at the start. Also it is quite rare for sequences to be split into thirds when only two 'in between' can be used because of filming restraints. This is much harder to draw, so invariably a slow in or slow out is used instead.

For rotating objects through three dimensions it is necessary for the assistant to plot the centres of the two key drawings, and then the centre of the breakdown position on a separate sheet of paper. All three sheets are then aligned, with the breakdown sheet being topmost whereupon the breakdown drawing can be completed. By superimposing sheets it is

possible to trace objects moving through three dimensions and by rotating the sheets around arcs can be plotted with greater accuracy.

The making of a full animated sequence that is to be filmed and produced for television or the cinema naturally involves a good deal more stages than a *Fantavision* production, though users of such programs would benefit from following some of the stages.

The script is the first thing to produce, though with animation the dialogue is of far less importance than the visual action. With sampled speech being so memory expensive on computers, this is likely to be kept to a minimum. From the script a storyboard is produced, which portrays the action in a graphical form. Usually at this point the key dialogue and music elements are recorded so that the team of animators can synchronise the cartoon to it.

Once completed an editor assembles it into the film, and then breaks it down phonetically, marking on the film where certain sounds begin and end. Meanwhile the director is arranging for designers to produce their own interpretations of the characters in the feature, which when approved will be used as the reference models for the rest of the animation team. The process then advances to Leica reel viewing of the film, line tests, cleaning up the drawings by a special cleanup crew, and transference of drawings to acetate or gel for painting. By this time the backgrounds will have been drawn and painted, and after a final checking everything is passed to the cameramen for actual film shooting. After viewing the rushes, dubbing of sound effects, a final print is developed by merging the film and soundtrack. The finished product is now ready to roll.

## COMPUTER ANIMATION

With traditional pen and paper animation being such a time consuming process, it was inevitable that computers would begin

to play a progressively larger role as they became faster and more powerful.

*Tron* from Walt Disney was one such film that featured numerous examples of computer generated graphics and received acclaim accordingly. Receiving rather less public enthusiasm was the Genesis sequence from a 1982 film, *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, which was entirely computer created and animated. It was also the longest piece of totally computer generated images seen in a commercial film. That section, and the very best special effects in films such as *Star Wars*, *Cocoon*, *E.T.*, *Poltergeist* and *Enemy Mine*, was produced by the organisation known as Industrial, Light and Magic, or ILM.

ILM uses the standard technique of creating objects from polygons, and describing them as three dimensional with geometric formula. The smaller the polygon the greater the realism, but some surfaces are very difficult to describe as polygons so those areas are texture mapped. Rather like *Fantavision's* method of using fill patterns, but on a vastly more complex scale. Here textures such as leather, bark and sand are described as three dimensional patches in the computer and then fitted to the surface of the polygon by stretching and size manipulation. Once an object is fully described it can be manipulated at will. The Last Starfighter from Digital Productions featured polygon created starships and space stations, with each one consisting of around 600,000 polygons. Even so the texture of many of the ships was a uniform semi glossy metal. ILM has received delivery of a computer called the Pixar which is capable of processing 80,000,000 polygons, but unfortunately it won't do it quite quickly enough and there is as yet no practical method of storing the colossal amount of data that it entails. When these problems are solved though the degree of surface detail will approach that of 35mm motion picture film. All generated by computer.

● Duncan Evans

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# RESULTS PAGE.

Yes folks, it's back - the most tense, the most exciting, the most feared, and revered page in the magazine. The page that, without warning, can thrust unsuspecting folk to the height of fame. Yep, it's the Pink Page Compo Results.

### THE BEAST HAS EATEN!

First off, an absolutely huge list of lucky people who were first to jump out of the editorial

hat and declare themselves winners of the mammoth Psygnosis Beast Feast! compo.

The personoids mentioned below will all be receiving copies of Shadow of the Beast on the Amiga any day now, each complete with a flashy Roger Dean Beast T-Shirt.

**Emyr Bodfel Jones**, Llanrwst, Gwynedd; **S.C. Cox**, Exeter, Devonshire; **Mr.K.A. Siddiqui**, Chiswick, London; **Andrew Clarence**, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear; **Alexander Kells**,

Watermeadow, Northampton; **M.A. Bingham**, Bakersfield, Nottingham; **Nigel Hastie**, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear; **H.M. Brown**, Benfleet, Essex; **Mr.J.V. Patel**, Evington, Leicester; and **Jon Taylor**, Bovingdon, Herts.

Ten runners-up, who all win the absolutely amazing Roger Dean T-Shirt are:

**Simon Whitehouse**, Talke Pits, Stoke-on-Trent; **Mike Jones**, Hinkley, Leicestershire; **Ian Davenport**, Wimborne, Dorset; **Dan Gallagher**,

Omagh, Co. Tyrone; **Mark Clavering**, Ashington, Northumberland; **Iain Lowson**, Peebles, The Borders; **Christian Roig**, Roskilde, Denmark; **Mr.Matthew Bridges**, Chelmsford, Essex; **Mark Clapham**, Pannal, Harrogate; **Philip Anthony Brown**, Gelding, Nottingham.

Those nice people at Psygnosis will be dispatching your goodies to you pronto...

### THE SHINIEST LEATHER IN THE WEST!

Yeee haarr! Remember tha' lil ol' Rainbow Arts Shiny, Shiny Leather Compo yer ol' Ace buddies ran in them thar perdy Pink Pages back in October? Why sure ya do. We had enough entries even to dry out Sue Ellen, and that sure as hell ain't easy. Those lucky critters mentioned below should be receivin' a pair of sassy Cowboy boots real soon now, and why? 'Cos they was the first out of the editorial ten-gallon hat, that's why.

Mr.M.A. Reed, Kenley, Surrey (he's gonna donate his boots to his perdy lil lady - ma'am ya got yerself a real cool hubby there); **Mark Clapham**, Harrogate, North Yorkshire; and **Glen Durrant**, Canvey Island, Essex.

Well, that's all for this month folks. But you be sure to toon in to next month's compo results page. Ya never know, it could be your lucky day. See y'all there.

# THE PINK ?

We've got a bit ? hanging over the Pink Pages - and we reckon you can help us.

Traditionally on ACE the Pink Pages are put together during the last day or two of the month - and this is often reflected in the chaotic nature of the section! However, from now on we'll be slotting them into the full production cycle: and that means we can pack more into Pink than ever before.

However, we'd like to hear from Pinkers on the subject. Perhaps you've got some great ideas for the section that we ought to know about. Now's your chance to tell us.

Furthermore, we're prepared to open up access to the Pink Pages in a way not usually done on magazines. We've already printed many cartoons and short stories sent in by readers - perhaps you're a budding cartoonist or fiction writer who'd like to get into print. Now's your chance.

Alternatively, you may have a special interest you pursue and about which you have expert knowledge: flying perhaps (so you could sound off about flight simulators) or MIDI (so you could sound off about sound). Short articles in areas of special interest will often find a place on these pages.

You can also help by writing to us to let us know what you think of the current features in the Pinks: the games survey, the Stock Market (just starting this issue); the puzzles, the crossword (missing this month but back again next month); and so on. Every bit of information we get from you helps us to build a better magazine.

Don't forget that the Pinks were always intended to be YOUR pages...and also pages to have FUN with. So get in touch now with: The Pink Pages Editor, ACE Magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farrington Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

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# THE PRIZE PUZZLE PAGE

## SORRY!

Whoops, prize puzzle 19, printed in last month's issue was subject to a slight hiccup. Unfortunately the sum did not reproduce on the page quite as it should of done.

For those of you who spent hours trying to figure it out and failing....sorry! And to make recompense here is the offending article once again, only this time with the

sum in the correct format. The deadline for entries for puzzle 19 is now 7th December 1989.

## PRIZE PUZZLE 19

Set by  
Archie Medes

Jamie was never much good at long multiplication.

'I blame these pocket calculators,' his father was heard to complain, 'Everyone gets lazy and relies on them too much. In my day we had to use brain power....'

'Alright Dad,' replied Jamie, 'Point made! But if you want to exercise **your** little grey cells here's a long multiplication for **you** to try!'

Jamie sketched the following skeleton

multiplication sum on a piece of paper. Adding a few digits he handed it over.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} 2 \\
 \text{---} \text{---} 3 \text{---} \\
 \hline
 \text{---} \text{---} 4 \text{---} \\
 \text{---} \text{---} 5 \text{---} \\
 \text{---} \text{---} 6 \text{---} \\
 \text{---} \text{---} 7 \text{---} \\
 \hline
 \text{---} 8 \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---}
 \end{array}$$

The next day at work Jamie's dad was all set to give

up until a colleague came to the rescue with a short computer program. In the sum shown the dashes represent the positions of the missing digits.

Can you complete the sum?

## PRIZE PUZZLE 20

Set by  
Archie Medes

If there is one thing that Henry cannot stand it's Christmas shopping. Over the preceding weeks he had done his best to put off the day on which he had to venture into town, fight his way through the crowds and try to find gifts suitable for all those on his list of recipients.

However, to help him in his task he had jotted down a list of items and their prices:

Cassette Player  
£15.99

Cuddly teddy bear  
£8.85

Gramophone record

£5.99

This year's trendy game  
£21.73

Bottle of gin  
£9.47

Christmas hamper  
£17.59

Shirt & matching tie set  
£11.00

This list proved a great help as he was able to select all of his presents from this list (although he did not necessarily buy every item listed). His only complaint was the total bill which came to exactly one hundred pounds. For all his faults, Henry is very generous when it comes to giving presents to his friends and I already have it on good authority that I am down to receive a shirt and tie set!

Can you discover exactly which items were on Henry's present list?

## PUZZLE 19 ENTRY FORM

NAME: ..... Telephone Number: .....

ADDRESS .....

Closing date 7th December 1989 (revised deadline)

## PUZZLE 20 ENTRY FORM

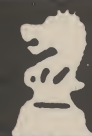
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# WIN A FERRARI!

This month Ace and Domark give you the chance to win the car of your dreams. We're giving away not one, but five (yes, count them) Ferrari F40s. Wha'd'ya mean you don't believe me? Oh... right... Ok then. They're actually Radio Controlled Ferraris (and believe me, they are lush).

The models come with a full-function controller with forward, reverse, left/right turn, and stop controls. There are two forward speeds and a turbo charger (which means this baby runs very, very quickly). Power comes from easily recharged ni-cad batteries, and for night driving there are automatic headlights.

So what is all this

generosity in aid of then? Well, Domark is celebrating the launch of the latest title on the Tengen label, Hard Drivin'. Domark have already brought you a great driving game in the form of Tengen's APB, a quirky chase game featuring Officer Bob, a hard working patrolman. Now they are about to release computer versions of the best driving simulation ever to hit the arcades.

The game has been heralded as the most realistic driving sim ever. You'll be stunned by the smooth solid 3D vector graphics, and superb handling of the car. There are three separate challenges in Hard Drivin'. First there's the Speed Track where the

challenge lies in beating the fastest time. To do this you must overtake slower cars while avoiding oncoming traffic. Once you've mastered that you can try the Stunt Track which features a draw bridge (which always seems to be open!) and a complete vertical loop!

If you manage to complete both courses, and that ain't easy, you can challenge the ghostly phantom photon in a test of nerve and co-ordination. Sound good to you? Sure sounds good to me... look out for this one over Christmas.

So, what do you have to do to win one of these 'ere right flash Ferraris. First, answer the questions below:

- (i) Which company produced the original Hard Drivin' Coin-op?
- (ii) What was the name of another recent driving game from Domark which featured a hard working police patrolman?
- (iii) Which of the following feature is not to be found on the Radio-Controlled Ferrari F-40s?
  - (a) Two-speed forward running,
  - (b) In-car stereo,
  - (c) Working headlights.

Hold it, hold it, I'm not finished yet. Once you've done that take the following words and use them to construct a new phrase. You don't have to use all of the letters, but you can't use any that aren't given here. The senders of the five wittiest and most pertinent phrases (with all the questions right) will win the Ferraris.

## DOMARK TENGEN HARD DRIVIN FERRARI

Send your answers on the form below to:

Yeah, sure I wanna Ferrari, ACE magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London. EC1R 3AU.

Don't forget to clearly state your name and address. Entries must reach us by 7th December 1989.

## ACE FERRARI COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

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Trivial Purs  
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West Bank  
Yogi Bear  
Yes Prime N

Alternative-  
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# CDI UPDATE

STEVE COOKE KEEPS YOU CLUED UP ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CDI WORLD AND VISITS MIRRORSOFT TO SEE THE NEW CDI VERSION OF THE GUINNES BOOK OF RECORDS...

CD-I is rapidly taking up position to become the dominant entertainment medium of the near future. But don't just take our word for it – ask Pergamon Compact Solution who – as part of the same group as Mirrorsoft – are currently investing heavily in the new medium.

As Richard Heasman points out on this month's letters pages, the equipment that usually ends up in our homes does so for two reasons: standardisation and lots and lots of money, for advertising and marketing.

CD-I is already attracting lots and lots of money, because the people who are involved in its development realise that whoever gets it right will reap massive rewards. The digitisation of music (CD) and video (laser disk) means that in future computer games will for the first time share a common format with other media. Combine that with all the money to be made from converting old ideas on video and LP's into 'new' ideas (in marketing terms) on CD-I and you've got a good excuse for the big boys to get involved. And they

only do so when they know that somehow they're going to get their money back.

ACE is about to publish a theme issue on digital entertainment, covering not only CD-I but also the newer and more important DVI. DVI stands for Digital Video Interactive and is based upon work done by RCA. Unlike CD-I, it allows you much greater computer control and higher quality computer generated graphics – both of which work together with the same superb video and sound resources that CD-I has.

Pergamon Compact

Solution's new version of the Guinness Book of Records is a good example of CD-I in its early – but still very impressive – stages of development. It allows you to select any 'record' and then cue in visual and audio information where appropriate. What's more, Pergamon have designed an entirely new framework for the book that enhances the natural interactivity of the new medium.

This framework is loosely based on the Apple Hypercard system (the same that was used to program Cosmic Osmo) and it is this devel-

oping software 'hyper-technology' that is almost certain to drive the new CD-I and DVI games.

The reason for this is that the multi-media nature of these products demands a system that can handle and establish links between very different kinds of information, and 'hypermedia' fulfill this task very well.

At present, hypermedia are restricted to the Apple Mac and, to some extent, the PC. For this reason many early CD-I products are (with the exception of the Philips machine to be released next year – see ACE

issue 24) likely to be limited to Apple and PC products. Activision, however, are developing a Hypercard-type application that should, with any luck, be available for the Amiga and possibly for the ST within a few months. This would have a dramatic effect on 16-bit gameplay and we'll be reporting on it in our Hypermedia theme issue in the very near future.

For that issue we've interviewed hyperware designers in Britain and the US, so don't miss it – it'll bring you not only up to date, but into the future as well!

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Beyond the Blackhole		22.95	Rally Cross Challenge	6.99	10.50	6.99	10.50
Blowdown		17.95	Rick Dangerous	7.25	10.85	7.25	10.85
Bridge Player 2150 Galactica		22.95	Risk	7.25	11.20	-	-
Captain Command*		16.45	Robocop	6.99	10.50	6.99	10.50
Chessmaster 2000*		17.95	Shinobi	6.99	11.20	6.99	11.20
Conflict in Europe		22.95	Silkworm	6.99	10.50	6.99	10.50
Course of the Azure Bond		22.95	StarTrek 2	10.50	12.99	-	-
15 II		34.95	Star Thunder	-	-	-	13.95
Inter Formula One*		17.95	Strider	7.25	11.20	7.25	11.20
11 Tank Racer*		17.95	Stunt Car	10.50	16.95	10.50	16.95
Mini Horse Racing		28.95	Super Quikster	-	-	-	6.99
Populous*		17.95	Super Wonderboy	6.99	10.50	6.99	10.50
Rick Dangerous		17.95	Super Cars Test	-	-	-	-
Sleeping Gods Lie*		17.95	Test Drive 2	-	-	-	13.95
Space Max		16.95	Thalamus the Hits	-	-	-	9.50 13.50
Stunt Car		28.95	Tolkien Trilogy	9.99	13.50	9.99	13.50
Stunt Man Megablast*		17.95	Toobin	7.25	11.20	7.25	11.20
Synaphobe		16.95	Wee Le Mans	6.99	10.50	6.99	10.50
			Weird Dreams	-	-	6.99	10.50

# ACE DIARY

## NOV/DEC '89

### NOVEMBER

### DECEMBER

#### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

*Chaos Strikes Back* (ST) from FTL/Mirrorsoft - Dungeon master data disk  
*Interphase* (ST and Amiga) from Image Works - 3D vector graphic shoot 'em up  
*Bobo* (all formats) from Infogrames - based on French cartoon character  
*Sim City* (Amiga, PC and C64) from Infogrames - much-publicised 'God' simulator  
*Tintin on the Moon* (all formats) from Infogrames - based on 60 year old comic book hero  
*Barbarian II* (PC) from Palace - hack, hack and hack again  
*Barbarian II* c/w *Antiraid* (PC double package) from Palace - keep hacking  
*Space Ace* (ST and Amiga) from Readysoft - sequel to *Dragon's Lair*

#### MONDAY 13

35 shopping days until Christmas. Plenty of time yet.  
 Festival of St Francis, patron saint of emigrants.

#### TUESDAY 14

Happy Birthday to King Hussein of Jordan.

#### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

#### GLANCE

*Bar Games* (PC) from Accolade - strange activities in American pubs.  
*Hard Drivin'* (all formats) from Domark - famous coin-op conversion  
*Toobin'* (CPC tape and disk) from Domark - not so famous inner-tube racing-sim  
*Liverpool* (all formats - even MSX) from Grand-slam - based on reasonably famous football team and club  
*Seven Gates of Jambala* (ST, Amiga and C64) from Grand-slam - run, jump, collect and dodge  
*Tank* (ST) from Grand-slam  
*Onslaught* (ST and Amiga) from Hewson - arcade adventure  
*Stormlord* (ST and Amiga) from Hewson  
*5th Gear* (ST and Amiga) from Hewson - car racing for roadhogs  
*It Came From the Desert* (Amiga 1Mb only) from Mirrorsoft  
*Blade Warrior* (ST, Amiga, PC) from Mirrorsoft - hack and slay in fantasy setting

#### MONDAY 20

Last posting date for Christmas: the Azores, Canary Islands, the Vatican, Spain, Madeira and San Marino

#### THURSDAY 23

The Americans start tucking into their turkey now -

for Thanksgiving Day.

#### FRIDAY 24

Computer Shopper Show, Alexandra Palace, London N22  
 Software and hardware bargains in a carnival atmosphere.

#### SATURDAY 25

Computer Shopper Show, Alexandra Palace, London N22

#### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

*European Superleague* (all formats) from CDS - football strategy  
*Vindicators* (C64 tape and disk) from Domark  
*Star Wars Trilogy* (Apple Mac) from Domark - all three titles in one package  
*Dynamic Debugger* (Amiga) from Image Works - shoot 'em up  
*Bad Company* (ST and Amiga) from Logotron - shoot 'em up  
*Jig Saw* (Amiga and PC) from Logotron  
*Hardball II* (PC) from Accolade - baseball sim

#### MONDAY 27

Last posting date for Christmas: all of continental Europe

#### THURSDAY 30

St Andrew's day  
 Gary Lineker born 1960

#### FRIDAY 1

Festival of St Eligius, patron saint of smiths, farmers and metalworkers.

#### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

*Powerboat USA* (all formats bar Spectrum) from Accolade - powerboat racing sim  
*Dr Doom's Revenge* (all formats) from Empire - comic book action

*Warp* (ST and Amiga) from Grand-slam  
*Gore* (ST, Amiga and PC) from Psygnosis  
*Ghouls'n'Ghosts* (all formats) from US Gold - Capcom coin-op conversion  
*Heavy Metal* (all formats) from Access/US Gold - US army sim  
*War of the Lance* (C64) from SSI/US Gold - RPG

#### WEDNESDAY 6

Festival of St Nicholas, patron saint of countries,

children, pawnbrokers and other causes Too Numerous To Mention

#### THURSDAY 7

January edition of ACE goes on sale. Form an orderly queue in your newsagent.

#### SATURDAY 9

Now only twelve shopping days until Christmas - frightening, isn't it?

#### ACE DIARY FORM

Please include the enclosed details in the earliest possible ACE DIARY. (Please make sure you send us your details as far in advance of the event as you can.)

COMPANY/ORGANISATION:.....

ADDRESS:.....

PHONE:.....

FAX:.....

NATURE OF EVENT:.....

DETAILS ENCLOSED ☐

#### FREE PUBLICITY!

That's right - if you've got something going on that you think should feature in the ACE Diary, then let us know. We'll fit in as much as we can (subject matter permitted), so drop us the details with the form above to: ACE Diary, Priority Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Alternatively fax us on 01 490 0901.

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10: £7.99 50: £35.99 100 £64.99  
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Altered Beast	7.25	7.25
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Bomber	6.90	6.90
Dark Force	8.75	8.75
Double Dragon	6.90	6.90
Dragon Ninja	6.50	6.90
Dragon Spirit	6.90	6.90
Dynamite Dux	7.25	7.25
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Quarterback	6.90	6.90
Rainbow Island	6.90	6.90
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Stunt Car	9.99	9.99
Super Wonder Boy	7.25	7.99
Thunderbirds	7.99	7.99
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War in Middle Earth	6.50	6.90
Winners	9.50	9.50
Xenophobe	6.90	6.90

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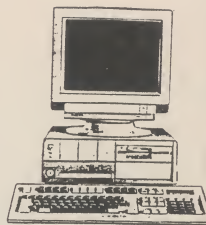
Konix Speedking (Anto) £8.99  
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Dynamite Dux	13.79
Dragon Ninja	15.79
Falcon	15.79
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Robocop	12.79
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# ACE DEALERS

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contact Carolyn Stork  
Friday.

Tel's sells

The rapidly expanding  
Terri's Computers &  
Video opened its sev-  
enth shop on Novem-  
ber 4, in Beckenham  
High Street, Kent.

Why not stroll down to  
take a look? The shop  
stocks 16-bit comput-  
ers and games (noth-  
ing on 8-bit), as well as  
PC games, Sega and  
PC Engine software  
and they've promised  
to support the Konix  
Multi-System when (if)  
it becomes available.

Beckenham a bit out of  
your way? Other Terri's  
computer stores are in  
Sidcup High Street,  
Orpington High Street  
and Petts Wood Sta-

tion Square - all in  
Kent.

Laughing all the way to  
the Funbank

Look out for stickers  
on doors and windows  
proclaiming that the  
store is taking part in  
the Funbank scheme.  
Buy your software  
from a Funbank dealer,  
and you'll be on your  
way to earning free  
games.

It works like this: you  
can pick up your spe-  
cial Funbank 'passport'  
from any participating  
store. Every time you  
buy a 16-bit title you  
get two tokens to stick  
into your passport;  
every time you buy an  
8-bit title you get a sin-  
gle token.

Twelve tokens in your  
passport means you  
can claim a free 8-bit

game; 18 tokens a  
free 16-bit game. Send  
your filled passport to  
distributor Leisuresoft -  
the address is on the  
passport - stating  
which title you'd like  
and wait for it to flop  
through the letterbox.  
You have until the end  
of January to take up  
Leisuresoft and 55  
dealers up and down  
the country on their  
offer, so start collect-  
ing now.

Top Man goes soft

If you buy your clothes  
from Top Man (come  
on, admit it), you may  
have noticed one of  
this season's new lines  
is ... software. Chain  
store Microbyte, which  
has nine outlets in the  
North and Midlands,  
will be opening a 'shop  
within a shop' at 15  
Top Man branches  
over the next few

months.

'Toys for the Boys'  
(ugh) will be the name  
of the in-store conces-  
sion, and will sell cas-  
settes and CDs as well  
as the Top 15-20 soft-  
ware titles for Amiga,  
ST, Spectrum, C64  
and Amstrad formats.

Look out for 'Toys for  
the Boys' in Top Mans  
(Top Men?) in [more  
to come]

Try before you buy ...

... is the theme at the  
four Software Super-  
store branches.  
Between now and  
Christmas they'll be  
hauling in the arcade  
cabinets so that you  
can experience all the  
thrills of the  
coin-op before (they  
hope) buying the com-  
puter version.

Chase HQ and Opera-  
tion Thunderbolt  
machines are both  
lined up to make  
appearances in the  
stores. But it's not just  
a matter of a quick  
blast before parting  
with your money -  
there are spot prizes  
and freebies such as T-  
shirts and posters  
waiting to give them-  
selves away as well.

And if you buy regular-  
ly at Software Super-  
store, have you got a  
Gold Card yet? Claim a  
Gold Card when you  
buy any piece of soft-  
ware at full-price and  
you'll get a 10% dis-  
count of any  
further full-price pur-  
chases that you make.

Software Superstore  
has outlets at Hanley,  
Stoke-on-Trent, The  
Waingate, Sheffield,  
Little Underbank in

Stockport and the cen-  
tre of St Helen's.

[plus TDK promotion  
from last month's  
issue]

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tions are subject to  
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Although we do our  
best to ensure our  
dealer promotion infor-  
mation is accurate at  
the time of going to  
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take any responsibility  
for changes or cancel-  
lations to dealers' plans.

Attention dealers! Don't  
keep your promotions,  
competitions, special  
offers, etc, a secret.  
Tell us at ACE and we'll  
tell everybody else.

## ACE DEALERS FORM

Dealers, don't keep your ACE readers in the dark. Send details of your promotions and events to us, and we'll let the world know about them. Just fill in the form and send it with your press pack to: ACE DEALERS PAGE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON. EC1R 3AU.

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# THE ACE PROFILE

## A complete personal profile of the ACE team...

### Steve Cooke Editor

Age: 34  
Born: Chelsea

#### TOP 5 MOVIES

1. Citizen Kane
2. Westworld
3. Crystal Voyager
4. Butch Cassidy
5. After Hours

#### TOP 5 BOOKS

1. Voyages of Doctor Dolittle
2. Dancers at the End of Time
3. Chronicles of Castle Brass
4. Operation Heartbreak
5. Madame Solario

#### TOP 5 MUSIC

1. Grateful Dead
2. Jefferson Airplane
3. Quicksilver Messenger Service
4. Love
5. Eurythmics

#### TOP 5 FOOD/DRINK

1. Chocolate Semolina
2. Home-Made Steak and Kidney Pie
3. Mescal
4. Hot Chocolate
5. Spanish Hot Chocolate (Thick)

### Rik Haynes Deputy Editor

Age: 22  
Born: Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex

#### TOP 5 MOVIES

1. Blade Runner
2. Scarface
3. Terminator
4. The Thing
5. Return of the Living Dead

#### TOP 5 BOOKS

1. Berserker
2. The Forever War
3. Neuromancer
4. Count Zero
5. Burning Chrome

#### TOP 5 MUSIC

1. Gary Numan
2. Propaganda
3. Depeche Mode
4. Human League
5. Prince

#### TOP 5 FOOD/DRINK

1. Italian

2. Chinese
3. Vodka
4. Orbit Peppermint Sugarless Chewing Gum
5. Lobster

### Laurence Scotford Staff Writer

Age: 23  
Born: Eastbourne

#### TOP 5 MOVIES

1. Darkstar
2. Silent Running
3. Apocalypse Now
4. Blue Velvet
5. Stunt Man

#### TOP 5 BOOKS

1. The Majors
2. The Maggot
3. Count Zero
4. On the Beach
5. The Great Gastby

#### TOP 5 MUSIC

1. Fleetwood Mac
2. Lyndsy Buckingham
3. Talking Heads
4. John and Vangelis
5. Tracie Chapman

#### TOP 5 FOOD/DRINK

1. Dry Martini
2. Hot Chocolate
3. Extra Strong Mints
4. American Hard Gums
5. Pasta Shells

### Jim Willis Art Editor

Age: 23  
Born: Frodsham, Cheshire

#### TOP 5 MOVIES

1. With Nail and I
2. Blue Velvet
3. Mary Poppins
4. Unbearable Likeness to Being
5. How to Get Ahead in Advertising

#### TOP 5 BOOKS

1. Quark XPress Manual
- "I haven't had time to read anything else!"

#### TOP 5 MUSIC

1. Elvis Costello
2. REM
3. Lloyd Cole and the Commotions
4. Talking Heads
5. Lone Justice

#### TOP 5 FOOD/DRINK

1. Jack Daniels

2. Hicks Special Draft
3. Chinese Vitals of all variety
4. Malibu
5. Rice Pudding and Jam sandwiches

### Garry Williams Advertising Manager

Age: 28  
Born: Blackpool

#### TOP 5 MOVIES

1. Debbie Does Dallas
2. Eraser Head
3. Predator
4. Breakfast Club
5. Clockwork Orange

#### TOP 5 BOOKS

1. The Wasp Factory
2. Ransom
3. Bright Lights, Big City
4. Rules of Attraction
5. Less Than Zero

#### TOP 5 MUSIC

1. Rick Lee Jones
2. Fine Young Cannibals
3. Barry White
4. George Benson
5. Crazy Johnson

#### TOP 5 FOOD/MUSIC

1. Tennents Lager
2. Kebab
3. Murphy's Irish Stout
4. Higsons Bitter
5. Fish and Chips

### Jerry Hall Deputy Advertising Manager

Age: 32  
Born: Sheffield

#### TOP 5 MOVIES

1. Close Encounters of the Third Kind
2. Close Encounters of the Third Kind (Special Edition)
3. ET
4. Star Dust
5. Sound of Music

#### TOP 5 BOOKS

1. Wind in the Willows
2. Complete Works of William Shakespeare
3. Boycott Autobiography
4. Any Doctor Who book by Peter Haining
5. The complete works of Tom Sharp

#### TOP 5 MUSIC

1. Beatles
2. Rolling Stones
3. Monkey's

4. ABBA
5. Roxy Music

#### TOP 5 FOOD/DRINK

1. Steak in Red Wine
2. Tandoori Mixed Grill
3. Bottle of Southern Comfort
4. Chips and Old Roger Bitter
5. More Chips with Beans

### Melanie Costin Production Controller

Age: 18  
Born: London

#### TOP 5 MOVIES

1. Dead Poet's Society
2. The Bounty
3. Batman
4. Cocktail
5. U2 Rattle and Hum

#### TOP 5 BOOKS

1. Active Worm
2. China Town
3. Any Mills and Boon book
4. U2 Rattle and Hum
5. Any Agatha Christie book

#### TOP 5 MUSIC

1. U2
2. Crowded House
3. Eric Clapton
4. Victor Laslo
5. George Benson

#### TOP 5 FOOD/DRINK

1. McDonald's
2. Champagne
3. Salmon
4. Chinese
5. Fish and Chips

### YOUR VERDICT PLEASE...

You've now got all the data needed for a complete psycho-analysis of the ACE crew. Are we completely crazy, very sensible or just plain boring? Write now and tell us your comments, theories or accusations.

The most informative, funny or bizarre set of results will win a special ACE Psycho-Profile Doctorate Certificate signed by professors Cooke, Haynes, Scotford and Willis (A very limited edition of one).

Write to: ACE Profile, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

# THE ACE STOCKMARKET ENTRY FORM

## WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

First, you need to check the ACE reviews pages to get an idea of the way games and software houses are moving up or down the charts. In future months, you'll also be able to keep a running record of the movements of the software house indices (starting this month at 100) to help you determine long term patterns.

There's £25.00 worth of software for your machine waiting for the first winner in each category each month picked at random from the qualifying entries. If the prize goes unclaimed for any category, we'll add a bonus mystery prize on for the next month – so there'll be some real goodies to get your hands on if you can get it right when others can't!

## ROUND ONE

Post this form or a photocopy to ACE Stockmarket, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, EC1R 3AU. Closing date 27th November 1989.

NAME: ..... Telephone Number: .....

ADDRESS: .....

..... Computer owned: .....

My prediction for next month's top five software houses on the Company Counter is:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

My prediction for next month's top five game on the Commodore 64 is:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

My prediction for next month's top five games on the Spectrum is:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

My prediction for next month's top five games on the Amstrad CPC is:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

My prediction for next month's top five games on the Atari ST is:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

My prediction for next month's top

five games on the Amiga is:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

Rules:

All entries must be received by the closing date for this round of November 27th 1989.

No employees of EMAP, or of any company involved in the production, distribution, or sale of ACE Magazine are eligible for entry.

Only one entry per household.

The decision of the judges is final and correspondence cannot be entered into.

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# The BLITTER END

## IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM - EAT 'EM!

**W**e just can't stomach this one. After indulging in hanky panky with the Power Glove, and dancing up and down on NEC's exercise pads, we have now been subjugating to - wait for it - the Nintendo cereal.

No, this is not a come-on, it's a very serious business, involving megabucks of license money and yet more income for the Japanese game giants who could now, if they wanted to, give every gamesplayer in Europe a free console and still show a profit. In fact, this latter tactic has been quite seriously suggested in some corners, who reckon that Nintendo would then make even more money by flogging us all expensive games to play on our free machines.

Well, that's something to think about over breakfast isn't it? Especially as you chew on the officially licensed cereal. Mat Simpson of South Woodford was so shocked he wrote in to tell us all about it. The advert reads 'Nintendo is two cereals in one. Wow! Super Mario Bros® and Zelda®. We rescued breakfast! If you can't beat them, eat 'em'. 'I swear,' writes Mat, 'that this is true.'

Don't worry - we believe you. Sigh...

★

You may by now have heard of the 'difficulties' behind the PC Show. The whole affair is clouded in litigation, but numerous parties are trying to stake their claim to the industry's number one show and the one thing that seems certain is that the PC Show, as you and I know it, will never happen again.

Three minutes silence.

Right, now for the plug. One of the parties attempting to muscle in on the act is none other than ACE's publisher, and Blitter is therefore perfectly well aware that most people will claim that anything I write in this column will be biased. However, anyone who's known me (and that includes Miss Fiorina in Brighton) for any reasonable length of time will testify that I have always strongly supported the idea of a games only show during the Autumn period - and it is a happy coincidence that this is exactly what our publishers are trying to set up now.

The reasons for this are devastatingly simple. Computer games have a bad press generally, however self-important the software industry may sometimes (but thankfully rarely) become, and good publicity is absolutely vital if the market is to increase. In fact publicity of any kind is better than the massive ignorance most other media show when confronted with the subject of computer entertainment.

The only way we can get publicity is by having a large public show in the country's biggest city on a regular basis, just before Christmas. We need TV coverage, radio coverage, and press coverage. And we ain't going to get that any other way.

There's also the question of new users. I

bought my first computer after seeing the Spectrum at the PC Show. I was enticed there by the advertisements in the local press. Having a public showcase for entertainment technology is going to win us more converts than ever before these days with the advent of more impressive products. And it's especially important at a time when so many people are preparing to invest in the industry for the long-term benefits of CD-I and other potential profitmakers.

See you at the show, where you can accuse me to your heart's content of being biased. I'll be too busy enjoying myself to take much notice!

★

Paradise Computers in Brighton are busy shifting Public Domain disks by the dozen at only £1.50 each. Like any responsible duplicating house, they obviously have to take stringent precautions against viruses.

Unfortunately, someone in the marketing department has obviously misinterpreted company policy here as the company plan to give away a free condom with each order. When all else fails...

★

When things get hectic in the ACE office, a sudden ceasefire period is declared and for a few blissful minutes all you can hear is the thunk, thunk of darts burying themselves in an expensive new dartboard. Scores of 180 and more are, of course, commonplace.

What is perhaps less impressive in the scores department, and which leads one to suspect that people (particularly computer games players) have abandoned the traditional darts game, is the manner in which this dartboard came to grace our office.

Gremlin Graphics were the good sports involved - at the PC Show they offered the board and the darts to go with it (plus a very nice rubber ockey) to the person who go the highest score with three darts during the Show.

Competition was fierce. The highest score, achieved by our very own Jerry Hall, was...65.

★

As you may have noticed on this issue's front cover, ACE has entered the world of electronic retailing with the introduction of a horrible looking - but very functional - bar code.

Bar codes are already the smart thing to do in the States, but here in the UK we've been a bit slow to catch on. The big advantage, of course, is that you, the reader, will now be able to scan in the relevant details from the issues in your collection using your free cover-mounted bar-code reader and personal freshener. We anticipate getting this on the cover by around

### NEXT MONTH...

In the next issue of ACE we'll be lavishing our annual Christmas present on you. This year it will be an essential fashion accessory which no self-respecting gamester can afford to be without - the ACE 1990 Diary.

Packed with information on all the things you need to know, it'll be nestling on the cover of next month's ACE...

Also in future issues you can look forward to exclusive coverage of hypermedia following a trip to the States, including a look at the successor to Cosmic Osmo and the first DVI games (see page 185 of this issue).

April 1st of next year.

Fortunately, the bar code won't be quite so obvious in future. This has been an ACE public announcement.

★

Finally, just a quick welcome to the latest member of the ACE Team: Melanie Costin, who'll be in charge of ad production. And if you're wondering there isn't a picture on this month's Blitter, it's because we didn't want to insult the poor girl by printing her in black and white....

**Blit-Blit!**

### Ooops!

The Commodore Show at the Novotel this month is on the 17th-19th November, and not as previously stated. Apologies to all concerned.

Awaken the beast within you...

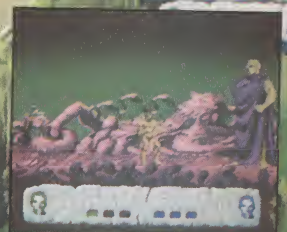
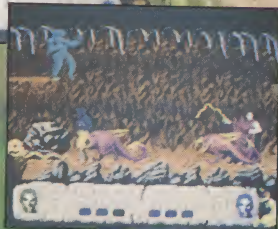
# ALTERED BEAST



Zeus has called upon you! Only a brave and fearless warrior can save his beloved daughter Athena, from the cunning clutches of Nelf, evil Lord of the Underworld.

Risen from the grave, you are presented with Supernatural powers beyond this world. Collect the 'mystical' spirit balls and transform into an awesome array of creatures – as Strongman, punch and kick harder than ever before, as WereWolf and Were-Tiger rip the flesh of the demons of hell and as Bear, knock out your enemies with one bad breath!

You hear the distant cries of the beautiful Athena and as the terrors of the Underworld tighten their grasp, the beast within you rises to face the final battle!!



 **ACTIVISION**



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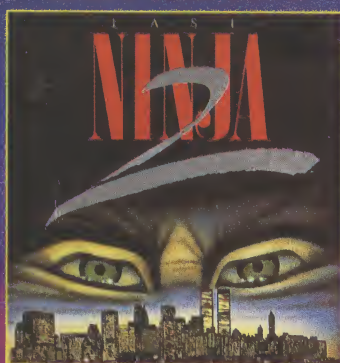
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**AFTERBURNER** — You've played the arcade smash — now experience the white-knuckled realism of a supersonic dogfight at home! Using your heat-seeking missiles and laser anti-aircraft fire, can you be top gun against supersonic swarm?

Experience brain-numbing G-forces; bones rattling with the body-jarring pitch and yaw... scan with your radar, lock on your target and FIRE!

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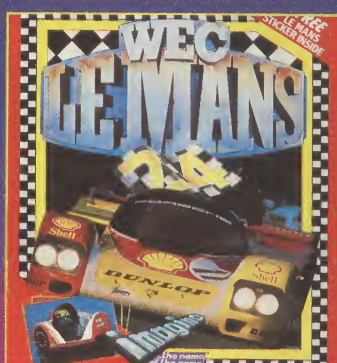
**LAST NINJA 2**



Once beaten, but not destroyed, the evil Shogun Kunitoki used all his mystic powers to transport himself through time and establish a new empire of tyranny in modern day Manhattan. In fear of Kunitoki's growing powers, the arcane gods used all their wisdom to bring you, the Last Ninja, across the abyss of time and confront your arch-enemy once more. You arrive in this frightening and awesome modern world bringing nothing with you save your intelligence, skill and cunning and a burning desire for vengeance. Will this be the final battle? Can you vanquish Kunitoki once and for all?

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**WEC LE MANS**



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**DOUBLE DRAGON**



Skillful programming has taken the superb graphics and addictive game play of the monster Arcade hit and faithfully reproduced it in home computer versions.

Join in deadly combat with the savage street gang of the infamous Shadow Boss. Use whatever weapons come to hand as you pursue the gang through the slums, factories, and wooded outskirts of the city to reach the Black Warrior hideout, for the final confrontation with the Shadow Boss himself!

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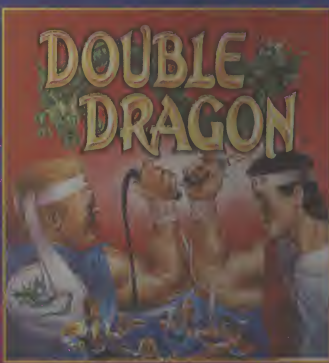
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